

GREENSBORO '70
AN ESSAY ON THE CITY AND ITS ECONOMY

Prepared For
Greensboro Chamber of Commerce
Greensboro, North Carolina

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GREENSBORO '70

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PREFACE

It is difficult to say that this study was planned and written to assume the form which it takes here. A rather more accurate description of its origins and development would be to say that these materials gradually accumulated over the years 1966 through 1969 and seemed finally to form a sufficiently coherent whole to merit publication. Some statements and data found here have now a slightly archaic flavor, but I doubt that the argument presented would be much altered or improved by a complete revision. Probably such a revision, or at least a review, of the major contentions of this document will be worthwhile after the bulk of the information to be provided by the census of 1970 is available for study.

From the beginning, the project has been sponsored and supported financially by the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, an organization for which I have developed great respect. They allowed me great latitude in approaching the Greensboro economy as an object of study and in no way sought to influence my findings. Those opinions and conclusions which are expressed here are my own. They do not represent any official position of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce and cannot be regarded as indicative of the thinking of its members. I do wish, however, to express my thanks for the many cases in which the Chamber staff was helpful. The same thanks are due a number of persons at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro who lent their assistance at numerous points. I hope the material here will have sufficient merit to justify the time and effort which have been invested in it.

I

THIS STUDY AND ITS UNIFYING HYPOTHESIS

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An explanation should be demanded from anyone who presumes to add yet another pile of pages to existing studies of the economic dimensions of Greensboro, North Carolina. The best defense of the present work is trite but valid. Greensboro is an interesting place. And no stream of events within the totality of the city's evolution is more provocative than the flow of its economic life. There are, moreover, several reasons for taking a fresh look at this flow.¹

First, no city is static, and the pace of change----of certain types at least----has been rapid in Greensboro. The facts are not the same in 1969 as they were even a few years ago, nor is the same range of information available. Second, different observers do not necessarily view factual materials alike, and several guesses as to the meaning of the past and the outlook for the future are probably better than one. Successive analysts can build on earlier work and may thus be able to produce a sounder result.

Further, a new study, almost irrespective of its specific focus, permits its author to repeat two obvious but important truths. One is that past development and basic resources define only the level from which a

¹The author has relied on numerous sources of information in preparing this study, but bibliographical footnotes will be sparingly employed except where direct use is made of such information. A list of sources is given at the end of the study.

city faces the future and the web of constraints within which it must seek maximum realization of its potential. Few cities have been so blessed by history and providence that they may safely assume progress to be inevitable, and few have been so badly short-changed that there is no hope. The other truth is that a "city", as such, does not do anything. Individuals, imaginative or dull, work well or poorly, singly and through private or public bodies, to accomplish much or little, in situations which they define for themselves, and with the resources at hand.

What follows is more an essay about Greensboro than a balanced and thorough analysis of the city. As such, it is vulnerable to criticism. This study does not detail the full past or present of Greensboro's economy. Heavy reliance is placed on a limited body of statistics which are readily available from standard sources. Coverage is selective rather than comprehensive, and some readers will think they see too much stressing of the virtues of expansion, the importance of location, the problems of downtown and the "spirit" or "ethos" of Greensboro.

One hypothesis or, perhaps more accurately, one point of view underlies the structure and orientation of the study. Simply stated, the hypothesis runs as follows: Greensboro has been brought by its history and that of its surroundings to a critical phase in development. The worst of the likely prospects that the city faces is maintenance of its past status as one among a number of comparatively prosperous, comparatively small places sharing leadership in a densely populated but

amorphous region. If Greensboro does no better than this it will not die on the vine. But, the hypothesis continues, there is an opportunity and a need in upper-middle North Carolina for a large and progressive city. Such a city would stand to become metropolis to an urban complex whose population should approach 1,000,000 in the 1970's and to an extensive hinterland as well. Additionally, the hypothesis concludes, this metropolis could logically be--and might just as well be--Greensboro.

The statements above are not mere "boosterism." Another observer might shift the probable geographic focus of urban growth west to Winston-Salem, south to High Point, or east to Burlington, but he would still argue that the potential described is real. It is hard also to deny that full realization of this potential would be advantageous to the leader city, to its neighborhood, and to North Carolina. The burst of imagination, energy and innovation needed to create a leading city would be more likely to create opportunities outside its boundaries than to impoverish others.

II

GREENSBORO IN ITS REGIONAL SETTING

II

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Greensboro is situated in upper-middle North Carolina just east of a line drawn to connect Atlanta with New York on the map. The city and its surroundings have much in common with the rest of central North Carolina, central Virginia, western South Carolina, and northwestern Georgia, all of which are similar in topography, climate, history, and many socio-economic characteristics. Though the cited portions of these four states do not constitute a unique economic region, they have more in common with each other than with the rest of the Southeast, the Northeast, or that portion of the nation lying across the Appalachian Mountains.

Problems of transport through the mountains have limited the economic contact of Greensboro and its region with the mid-section of the nation. Access to northeastern and other southern states is much better, and world markets are open through such ports as Savannah, Georgia; Charleston, South Carolina; Wilmington, North Carolina; and Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News, Virginia. The peculiarities of the transportation network have given the area a northeast to southwest development axis with terminal points at Washington, D .C. and Atlanta. Greensboro lies near the midpoint of this axis, some 330 highway miles from Atlanta and about 300 miles from Washington.

In Table II:1 population figures for 1930, 1960, and 1968 are shown

TABLE II:1

Population and Changes in Population, Georgia, North Carolina, South
Carolina, Virginia, and the United States, 1930, 1960 and 1968

(population in thousands)

<u>Area</u>	<u>1930 Population</u>	<u>1960 Population</u>	<u>1968 Population^a</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase 1930-1960</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase 1960-1968^a</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase 1930-1968^a</u>
Georgia	2,909	3,943	4,568	35.5%	15.8%	57.0%
North Carolina	3,170	4,556	5,122	43.7	12.4	61.6
South Carolina	1,739	2,383	2,664	37.0	11.8	53.2
Virginia	2,422	3,967	4,595	63.8	15.8	89.7
United States ^b	122,775	178,464	198,807	45.4	11.4	61.9

^aBureau of the Census estimate.

^bExcludes Alaska and Hawaii.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

for Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia. Also given are United States data and percentage changes in numbers of people. Population in the four states is moderately dense but unevenly spread, and population growth has likewise been uneven. Over the period considered, Virginia, the fastest growing, has consistently gained people more rapidly than has the United States. North Carolina's population growth has been about equal to that in the nation, while South Carolina and Georgia have added people less rapidly. Between 1930 and 1960, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia were subject to heavy out-migration, and this, rather than low birth rates or high death rates, was responsible for moderate population growth. Recent years have seen a dramatic shift in population changes. Since 1960, Georgia and Virginia have run far ahead of the national pace; North Carolina has exceeded the United States rate by a moderate margin, and South Carolina has climbed slightly above it.

Population growth has an impact on the available labor force in an area and is an important influence on market potential. But in the latter context, the level and growth of total income and per capita income must be considered along with numbers of people. Table II:2 shows total personal income, per capita personal income and per cent changes in these between 1929 and 1968 for the states with which we are concerned and for the United States.

The southeastern states are not among the wealthier in the nation. In both 1929 and 1968, Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia were below the

TABLE II:2

Total Personal Income, Personal Income per Capita, and Rank among 48 States
with Respect to These, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia,
1929 and 1968

Area	<u>Total Personal Income (Millions)</u>					<u>Personal Income per Capita</u>				
	<u>1929</u>	<u>1968^b</u>	<u>Increase,</u> <u>1929-1968</u>	<u>Rank among States^a</u>		<u>1929</u>	<u>1968^b</u>	<u>Increase,</u> <u>1929-1968</u>	<u>Rank among States^a</u>	
				<u>1929</u>	<u>1968</u>				<u>1929</u>	<u>1968</u>
Georgia	\$ 1,014	\$ 12,531	1,136%	22	18	\$349	\$2,743	686%	43	37
North Carolina	1,044	13,350	1,179	20	16	333	2,606	683	44	41
South Carolina	467	6,231	1,234	36	30	269	2,339	770	48	45
Virginia	1,053	14,008	1,230	19	14	434	3,049	603	36	27
United States	85,803	681,933	695	--	--	705	3,412	384	--	--

^aRankings exclude Alaska and Hawaii since 1929 data for these states are not available

^bPreliminary figures

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business.

United States average in per capita income. They are, however, fairly populous states and hence look more impressive when viewed from the standpoint of total income. The smallest of the four, South Carolina, ranked 36th of 48 states in 1929 total income and 30th among the 48 in 1968 total income. The highest ranking, Virginia, was 19th in the nation in total personal income in 1929 and 14th among 48 states in 1968.¹ It is especially significant that relatively slow population growth in South Carolina and Georgia did not prevent improvement in their rank with respect to total personal income. Given more favorable rates of population growth, the improved positions of North Carolina and Virginia are less surprising.

More impressive still are the actual increases in income. Between 1929 and 1968, total personal income in the United States rose by 695%. But South Carolina gained 1,234% over the same period, and Virginia's gain of 1,230%, North Carolina's 1,179%, and Georgia's 1,136% were not far behind. These increases have narrowed the relative gap between levels of living in these states and in the rest of the nation.

As the per capita figures in Table II:2 show, all four states were very poor in 1929. Because they started from such low figures, extraordinary percentage gains have left them well down the per capita income rankings. All improved their positions over the period shown, but all remained in the

¹Alaska and Hawaii are excluded from the rankings because of the lack of 1929 data.

lower half of the distribution of state per capita incomes. Should past growth rates continue, Virginia will attain the national average income within a relatively few years, and the other three states will move into the middle range of state per capita incomes.² Projection of income growth trends into the future is tenuous, but it seems realistic to expect continued growth at a pace faster than the national average for all four states.

The above suggests that Greensboro's location may be counted as a positive factor in the city's development. It is situated near the center of a group of populous states in which demographic growth has been a favorable, if moderate, force making for economic expansion and in which income gains have been strikingly large. In noting this, however, it must be stressed that Greensboro has no unique advantage. What has been said about Greensboro's location is also true of Winston-Salem, Charlotte, High Point, Raleigh and Durham in North Carolina and, with slight modifications, of Greenville and Columbia in South Carolina as well as several Virginia cities.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SOUTHEAST

The Carolinas, Georgia, and Virginia are not homogeneous within their own boundaries. Definite economic and developmental differences exist, and a sketch of these will provide a better base for considering Greensboro's potential. As a first step, it is easy to recognize that certain areas are, in our context, "special cases."

²In 1968 only 16 of 50 states were actually above the national average (mean) income.

The most prominent of these is Washington, D. C. and adjacent portions of Virginia. As the national capital, Washington is unique. Its growth is far more intimately linked to the political evolution of the United States than to any of the more usual sources of urban dynamism. Washington is a major trade center and, as such, its influence on nearby localities is great. But this city is not in most activities directly competitive with those of the Southeast. Its growth has no great impact upon them, nor does their development much affect that of Washington.

Norfolk and its neighbors in the Hampton Roads area are also distinctive. Here, a heavy concentration of population and economic activity has grown up around excellent port facilities, good rail access to the interior, and extensive military installations. Norfolk and its surroundings compete with the rest of the Southeast as a location for industry, particularly industry dependent upon imports or oriented toward foreign markets. In fields such as retail trade and services the Norfolk complex seems to have relatively little influence on other southeastern cities, and that which it has is felt mainly by Richmond and Washington. Moreover, the Hampton Roads ports provide the offsetting service of giving inland cities good access to the sea.

At the other end of our area of interest lies the burgeoning urban region containing Atlanta. This complex is of national significance in transportation, communication and manufacturing; it is the leading southeastern center of trade, services, and cultural activities. It is a

state capital and has important decentralized arms of the federal government. Atlanta is highly competitive in most of its functions with the other cities of the Southeast, and its size and rate of growth are such that its leadership seems unlikely to be seriously challenged. Atlanta's primacy does not preclude the development of relatively large secondary centers, but the potential of other cities must be estimated with a keen awareness of the strong competition emanating from the Georgia metropolis.

The expanse of territory between Atlanta on the southwest and Washington or Norfolk on the northeast includes three sub-regions which stretch across Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina and extend into Georgia. These are: 1) the Coastal Plain; 2) the Piedmont; and 3) southeastern Appalachia.

The boundaries of the three sub-regions are necessarily hazy, for they shade into each other rather than showing abrupt changes as invisible boundaries are crossed. General lines of separation are shown in Figure II:1, as are the chief cities and towns of each sub-region. The original bases for distinctiveness were associated mostly with agricultural productivity, topography and ease of access to water transport. The Coastal Plain is warm, humid and low-lying, with sandy soils and a long growing season. The Piedmont is an upland, with elevations ranging from about 500 to 1,500 feet, where soils are poorer and temperatures are more variable. Southeastern Appalachia contains much inaccessible, rugged country and includes the highest mountains east of the Rockies. Today, the

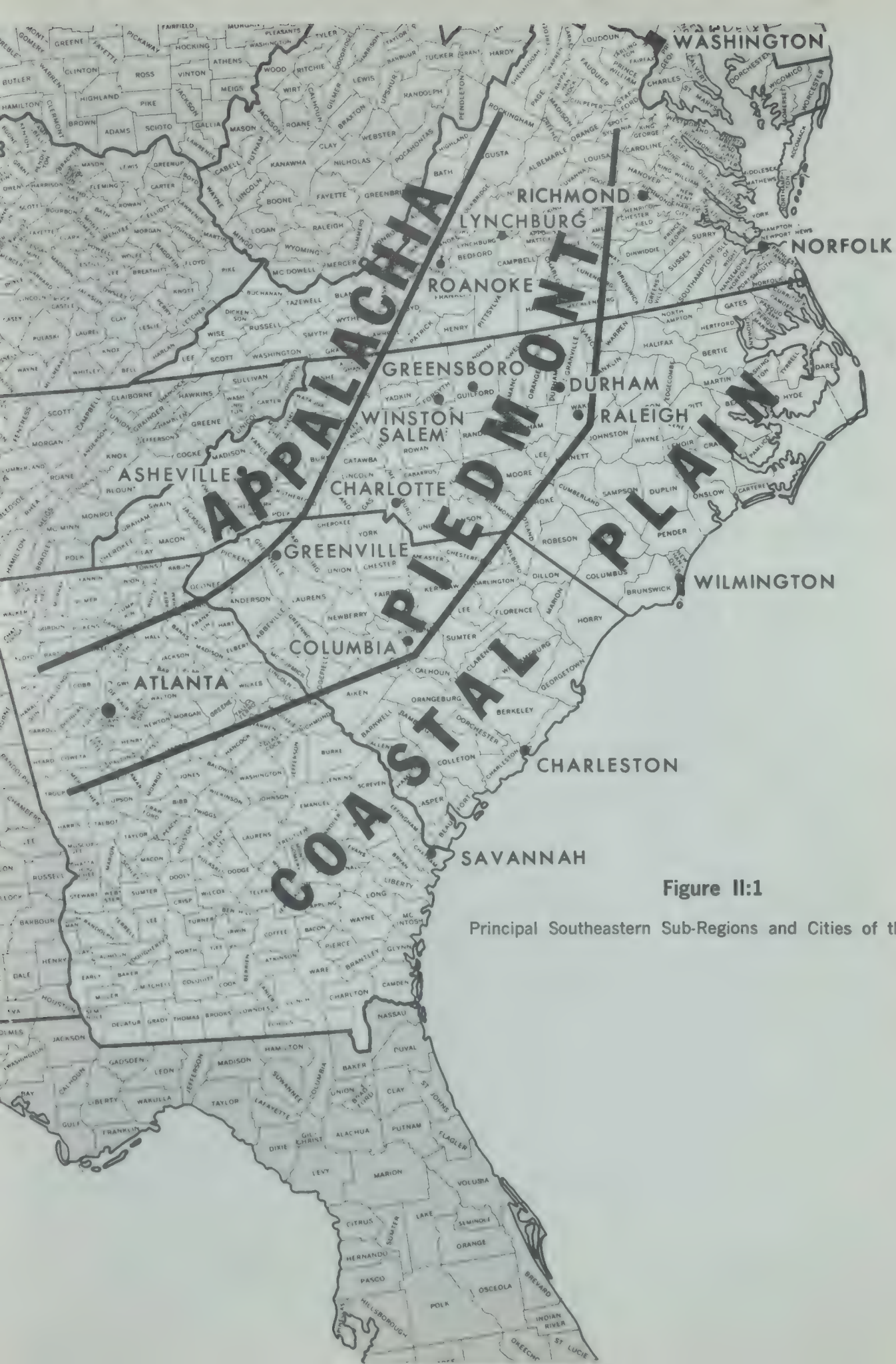


Figure II:1

Principal Southeastern Sub-Regions and Cities of the Area

distinctions are not merely physical; patterns of development have created economic sub-regions whose boundaries are in rough accord with natural differences.

The Coastal Plain is agricultural for the most part. Its chief cities, Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News, Charleston, Savannah and Wilmington, are ports dating back to Colonial America. Except for the Norfolk group of ports, however, each of these serves a limited hinterland, and none has fully realized the considerable promise suggested by its early history. Charleston and Savannah have grown to moderate size, but neither is of more than regional significance. Wilmington has not attained either the size or the importance of the other coastal cities.

At about the boundary between the Coastal Plain and the Piedmont lie three cities whose development has been much influenced by their being seats of government. Columbia, South Carolina, and Raleigh, North Carolina, are the capitals of their respective states, while Richmond, Virginia, is the state capital and contains important agencies of the federal government as well. Public affairs are the most basic business of these cities, but each also has become a center of trade and services. All three have considerable manufacturing, but only Richmond can be called a center of industry, and none of these cities serves as focal point for the agricultural activities of its state.

The Coastal Plain covers roughly the eastern third of Virginia and the Carolinas and a larger portion of Georgia. The far western portions of

Virginia and the Carolinas as well as north Georgia lie in the Appalachian Mountains. Agricultural resources in the mountain counties are sparse, and poor transport in much of the area has helped prevent widespread industrial development. Population is thin and has often been declining rather than increasing. The cities of the mountain zone are few, and none is particularly large. Some, such as Asheville, North Carolina, have become local centers of commerce and services, have attracted some industry, and have a substantial tourist trade. These cities are surrounded, however, by large expanses of relatively unpopulated land whose economic growth has been slow. Development in southern Appalachia may accelerate under the influence of special federal programs and completion of the interstate highway system. But its cities seem likely to exert little near-term effect on the rest of the Southeast.

Between the Coastal Plain and Appalachia lies the Piedmont, the most prosperous large sub-region in the Southeast. Development in the Piedmont has a manufacturing base of unusually large proportions supplemented by regionally important trade and service sectors. Cities are younger than those of the Coastal Plain. Most of them were small mill towns and local marketplaces at the beginning of the present century, but a number have experienced rapid and fairly consistent growth, and Greensboro is one of these.

MORE ABOUT THE PIEDMONT

Of the three sub-regions we have discussed, the Piedmont is the most densely populated, the richest, the best served by transportation and communications media, and the most closely integrated with areas outside the Southeast. It is also the most urban of the sub-regions even though no large city is to be found in the roughly 600 miles separating Washington (or Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News) from Atlanta. In the mid-section of this expanse of territory there is, however, an unusual urban configuration. A number of small to medium-sized cities lie close to each other in a Y-shaped band stretching from Greenville in South Carolina to Lynchburg and Roanoke, Virginia, on the north and Raleigh, North Carolina, on the east. Charlotte is the largest of these, but even it does not have a major share of the area's urban population.

Despite the smallness of individual cities, the central Piedmont is quite highly urbanized, and its economy tends to revolve around a limited number of nuclei. A suggestion of the extent of concentration is afforded by Figure II:2, which shows the distribution of counties having estimated populations in excess of 100,000 in 1967. It is apparent that these counties are not randomly spread.

Another kind of concentration is illustrated by Figure II:3. This map shows the distribution of counties in which value added by manufacturing is exceptionally high. The affinity of such counties for the Piedmont is apparent. Evident also is the fact that manufacturing is not distributed evenly but, like

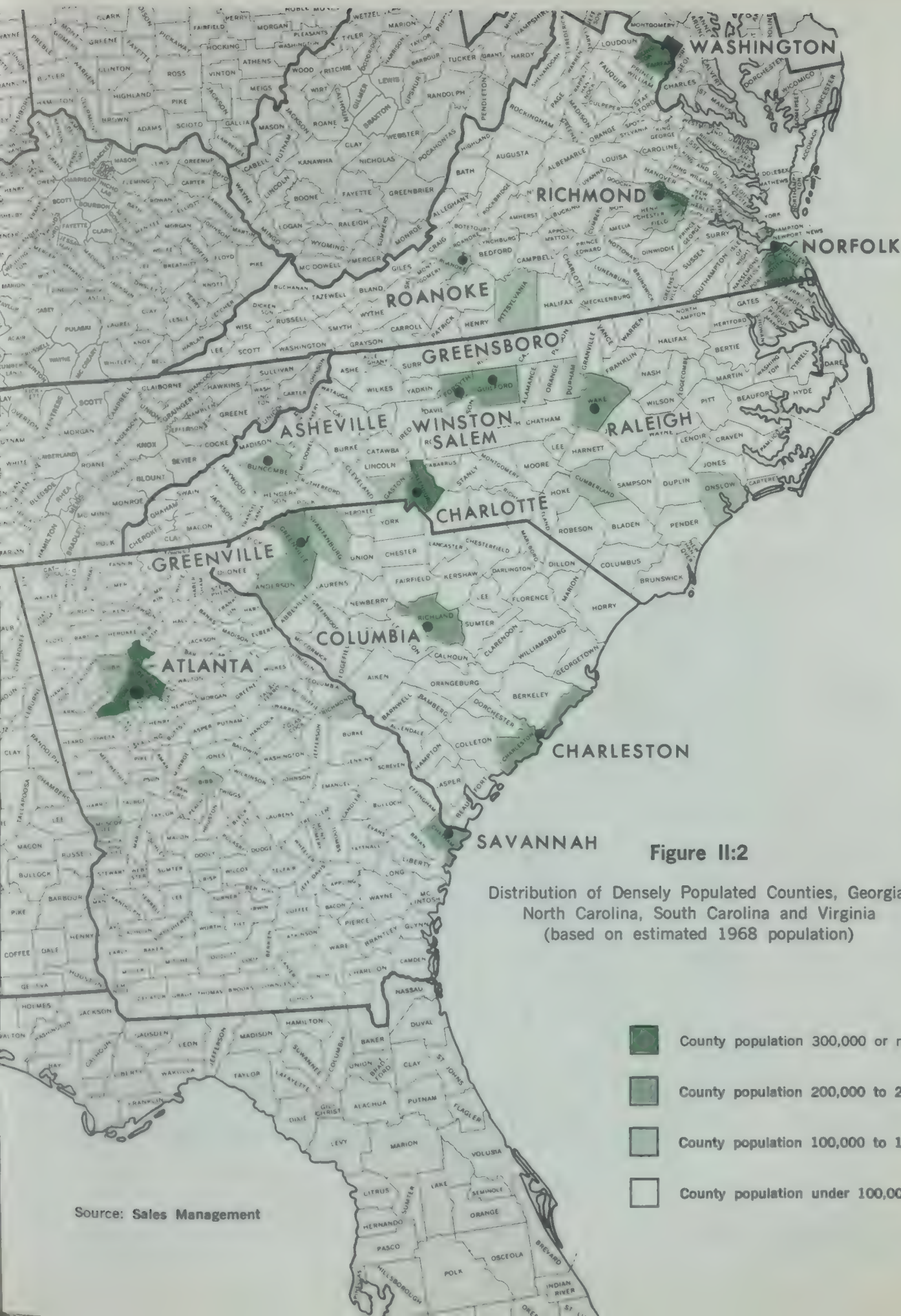


Figure II:2

Distribution of Densely Populated Counties, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia (based on estimated 1968 population)

- County population 300,000 or more
- County population 200,000 to 299,999
- County population 100,000 to 199,999
- County population under 100,000

Source: Sales Management

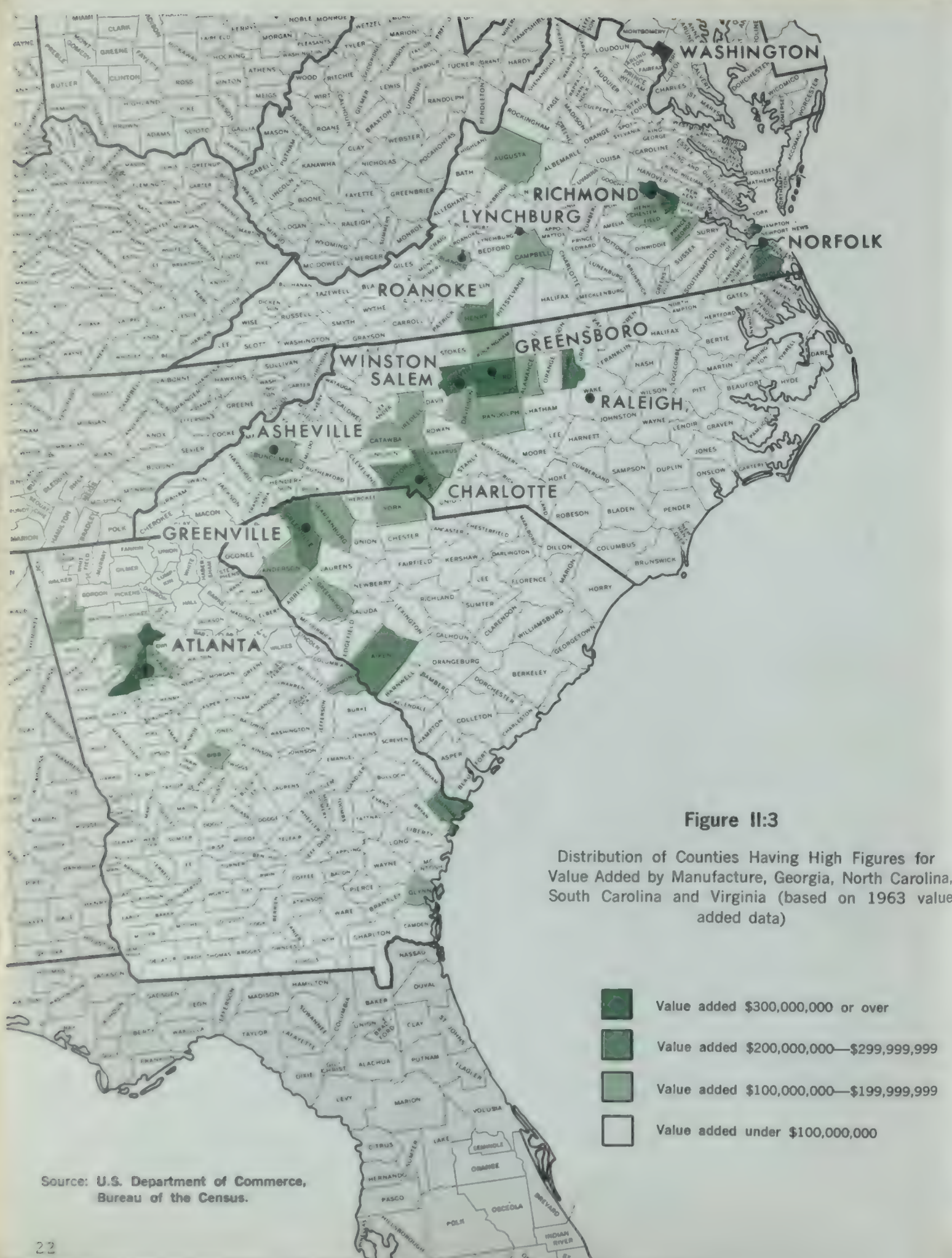
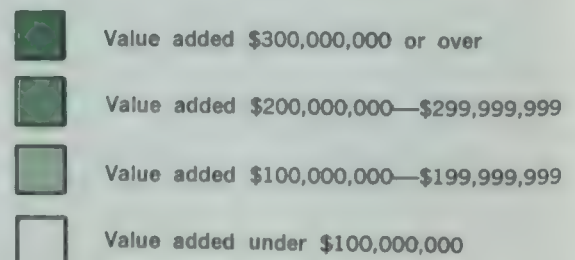


Figure II:3

Distribution of Counties Having High Figures for Value Added by Manufacture, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia (based on 1963 value added data)

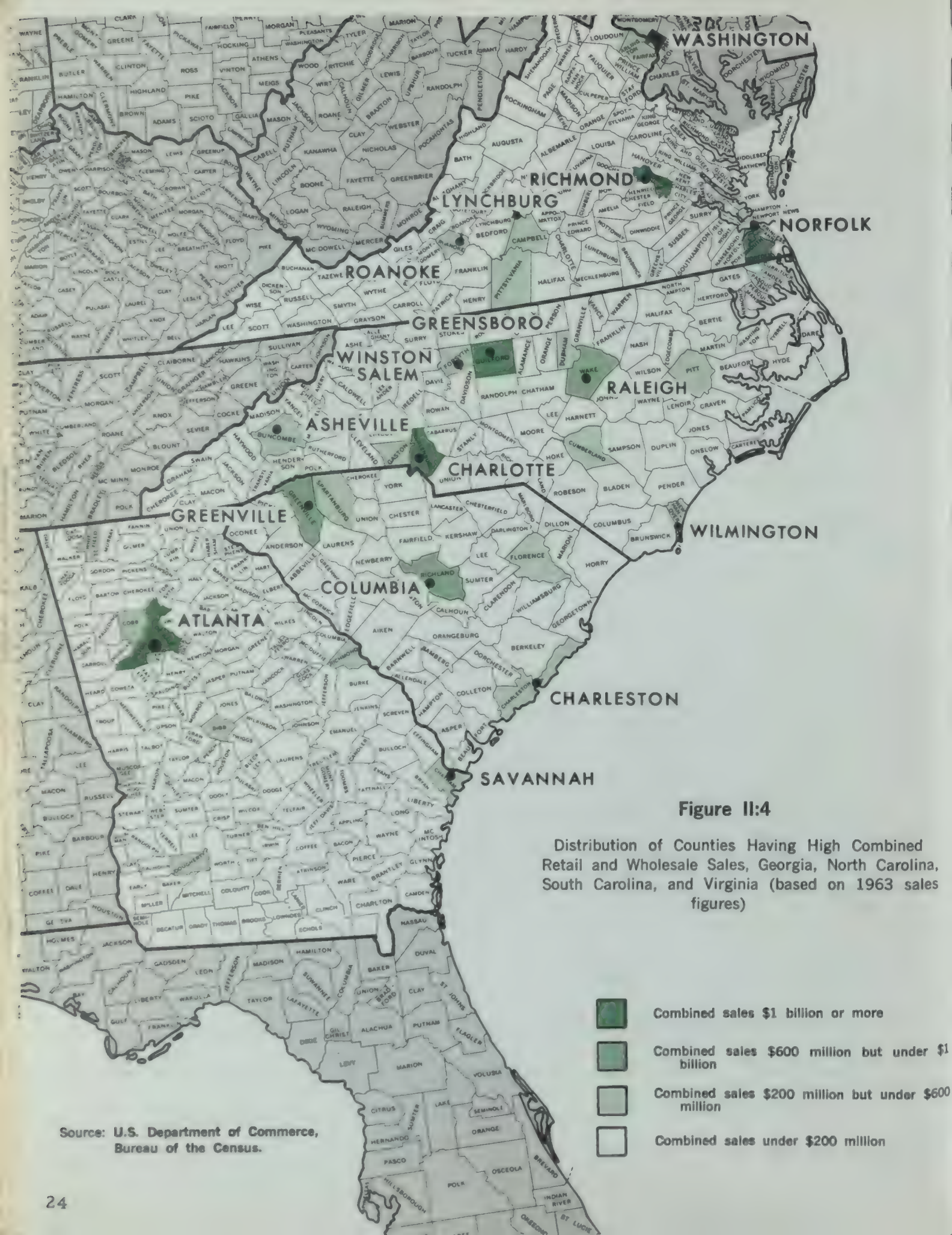


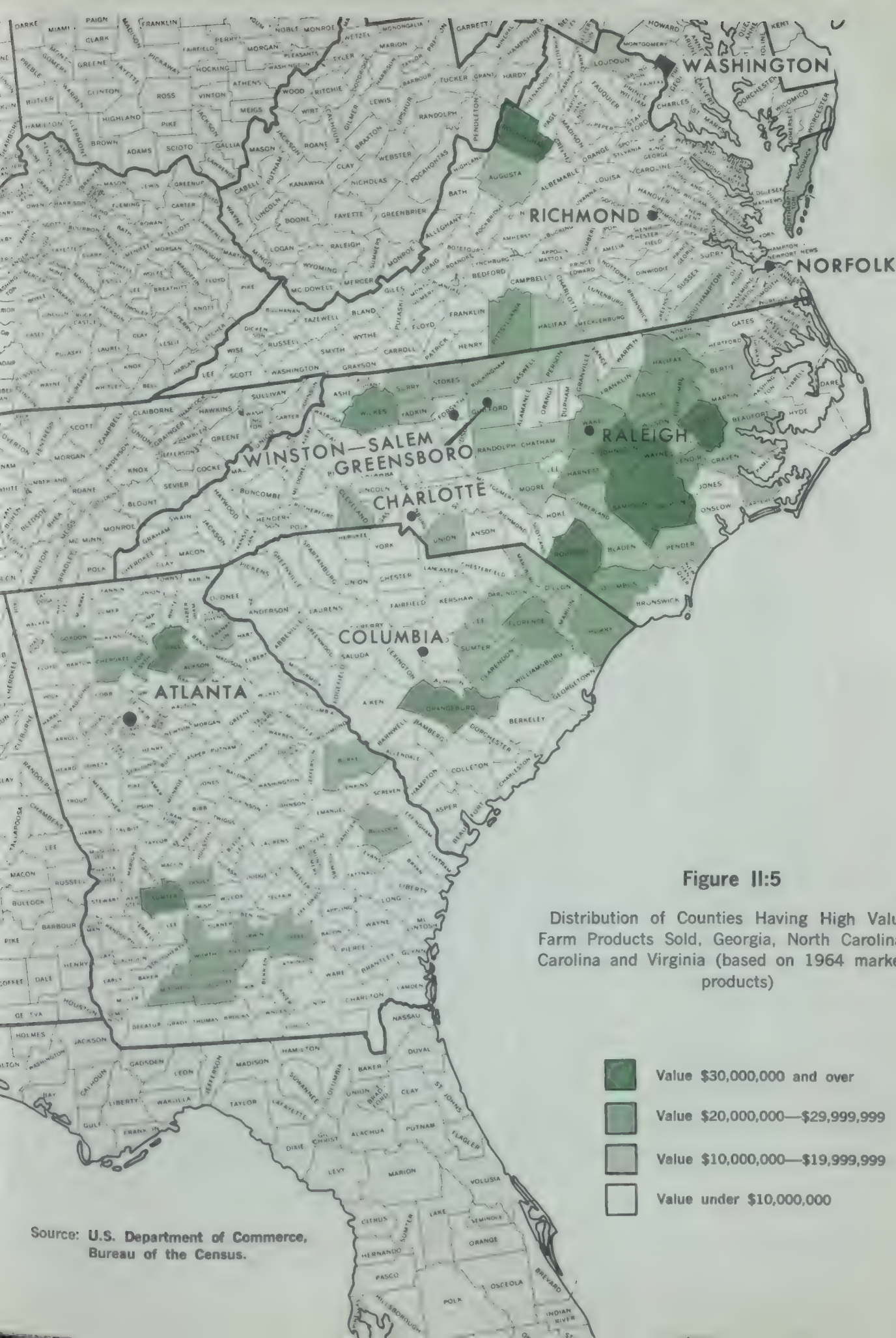
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce,
Bureau of the Census.

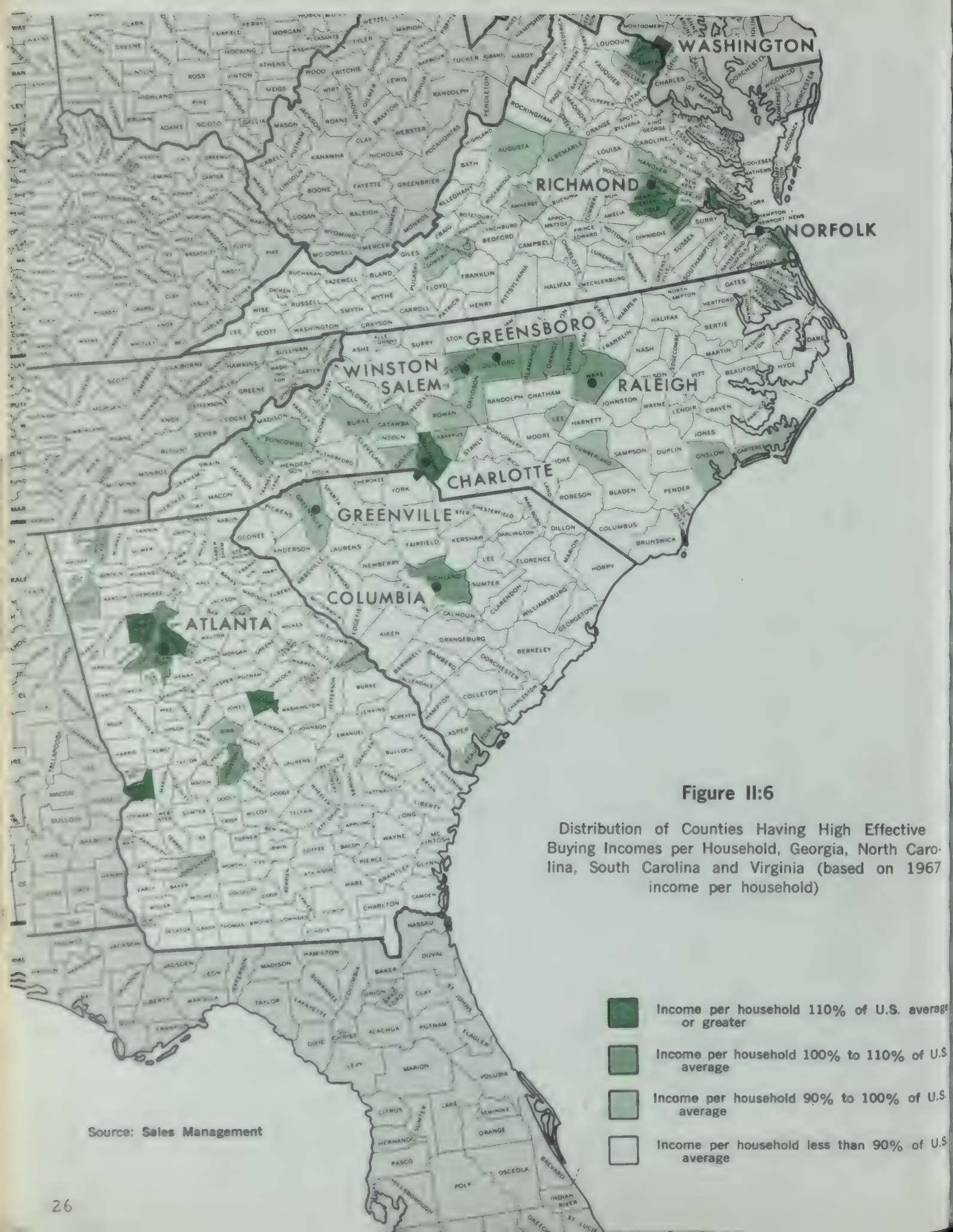
population, tends to cluster in certain parts of the Piedmont. Still another form of concentration is shown by Figure II:4. Here the variable is trade, and the map shows the geographic distribution of counties having high figures for combined wholesale and retail sales. These counties also congregate in the Piedmont portion of their states, and within this area they are quite unevenly spread.

Figure II:5 shows counties having high values of agricultural produce, and it shows clearly that the principal agricultural areas are found outside the Piedmont. Figure II:6 shows counties in which incomes per household are high. Except for the areas around Washington and Richmond and minor cases elsewhere, these prosperous counties lie mainly in the Piedmont.

The foregoing maps help to explain the failure of large cities to emerge in most of the area called the Piedmont. Except for Atlanta, there is no single city in this sub-region which can be termed a principal center of manufacturing, trade, agricultural activity and government. Cities throughout most of the South began as ports, regional agricultural markets, or state capitals. As they grew, they diversified, with some adding a substantial manufacturing sector and emerging as poly-functional cities possessing a broad foundation and the potential to attain large absolute size. The cities of the Piedmont have usually followed a different path. Most of them were scarcely more than villages until manufacturing industry in the Southeast began its 20th century rise to prominence. They were not surrounded by rich agricultural regions in most cases, and most were neither state capitals nor







the sites of important federal installations. Manufacturing was and is their most fundamental economic support, though some have now added important distributive and service functions.

Furthermore, the industries which became large early in the development of the Southeast were not of a type which generated the basis for large cities. Two of the three great industries of the Piedmont, textiles and furniture, are even today typified by many competing firms operating numerous small to middle-sized installations. These industries do not require really large numbers of workers per plant, massive investments in utilities and other infrastructure, or heavy concentrations of transportation and distribution facilities. The direct cost of labor is a large share of their total costs, and the skills required are seldom sophisticated. Such industries live comfortably in towns and small cities, and their manufacturing operations have spread widely rather than gravitating toward one or a few locations. The third great Piedmont industry, tobacco manufacturing, is highly concentrated, but its absolute size is not large. Two of the sub-region's principal cities, Durham and Winston-Salem, together account for a high percentage of the total value of tobacco manufactured in the United States, but they remain comparatively small.

Thus, economic growth in the Piedmont has favored a more diffuse pattern of urban development than is encountered in most other parts of the nation. The extent of urbanization is not well represented by statistics for single cities or other compact units such as counties. On the other hand, the

"strip-city" concept which is useful in certain parts of the United States and which is often applied to the Piedmont probably does not fit as well as another concept might. The most appropriate view of urban growth for this area seems to be one which sees a group of urban "districts" or "complexes," each consisting of several contiguous counties which are densely populated and growing, but which do not always contain a unique primate city.

The central Piedmont, lying in North and South Carolina, contains four substantial urban concentrations of this kind. These are: 1) a complex surrounding Greenville, South Carolina; 2) a complex surrounding Charlotte, North Carolina; 3) a complex surrounding Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and High Point, North Carolina; and 4) a complex surrounding Raleigh and Durham, North Carolina. Three of these complexes contain a core city which is significantly larger than others, and this makes it possible to regard that city as "central." But no such central city contains as much as half of the population of its complex. Thus, Greenville, Charlotte, and Raleigh play the role of central city within their respective complexes without wholly dominating them. In the fourth complex, Greensboro and Winston-Salem are the largest cities, but they are so nearly the same size that neither can be regarded as the undisputed "hub." Moreover, a third city, High Point, performs a number of core city functions within this complex.

Figure II:7 shows the locations of the four urban complexes just

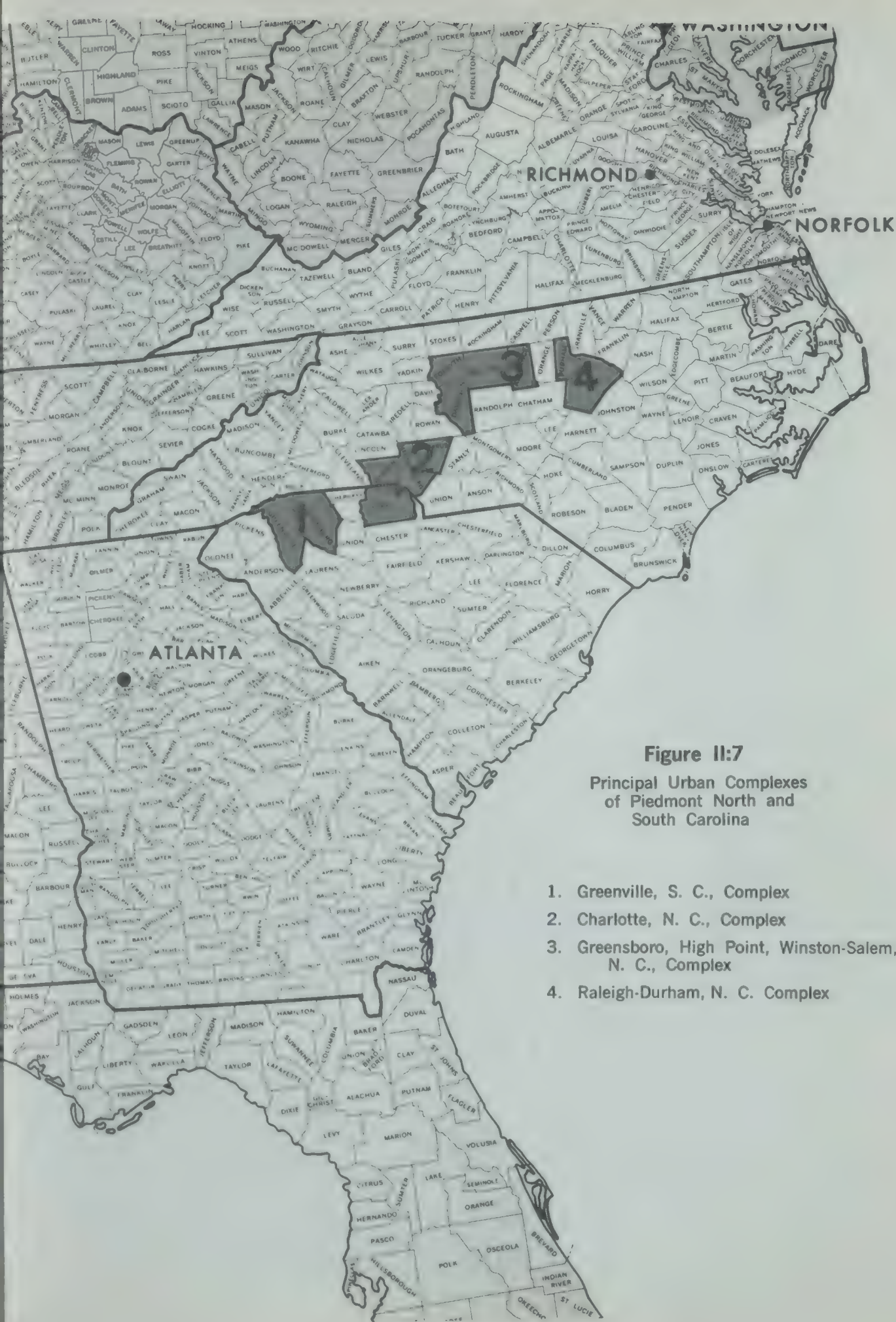


Figure II:7
Principal Urban Complexes
of Piedmont North and
South Carolina

1. Greenville, S. C., Complex
2. Charlotte, N. C., Complex
3. Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem,
N. C., Complex
4. Raleigh-Durham, N. C. Complex

mentioned. The center of the southernmost, the Greenville complex, is separated from Atlanta by a distance of about 150 miles and urbanization within most of this expanse of territory is slight. At the other extreme, the center of the Raleigh complex is about as far from Richmond as Greenville is from Atlanta. By contrast, the four complexes are not far from each other. In no case is the boundary of one as much as 50 miles from that of the next.

Surrounding and separating the four Piedmont urban complexes is a peripheral or "satellite" area. For its counties, one or more of the urban complexes serves as a source of jobs, shopping facilities, services, communications media, and other necessities or amenities. It is not possible to say exactly how large an area should be placed in the satellite category, but we have chosen to regard 27 North Carolina and South Carolina counties in this light. The exact number is unimportant; what is significant is that these are counties with fairly large populations and access to the goods, services, and labor markets of the urban complexes. Commuting is easy, and movement between periphery and complexes is substantial. Table II:3 shows certain economic variables for the complexes and periphery combined, and Figure II:8 shows the location of the counties included. This broader territory does not encompass all of the Carolinas-Virginia Piedmont, but it does contain the most highly developed portions of it.

So much attention to a relatively large geographic area may seem curious in a study of one city, Greensboro. It is not, however, out of place.

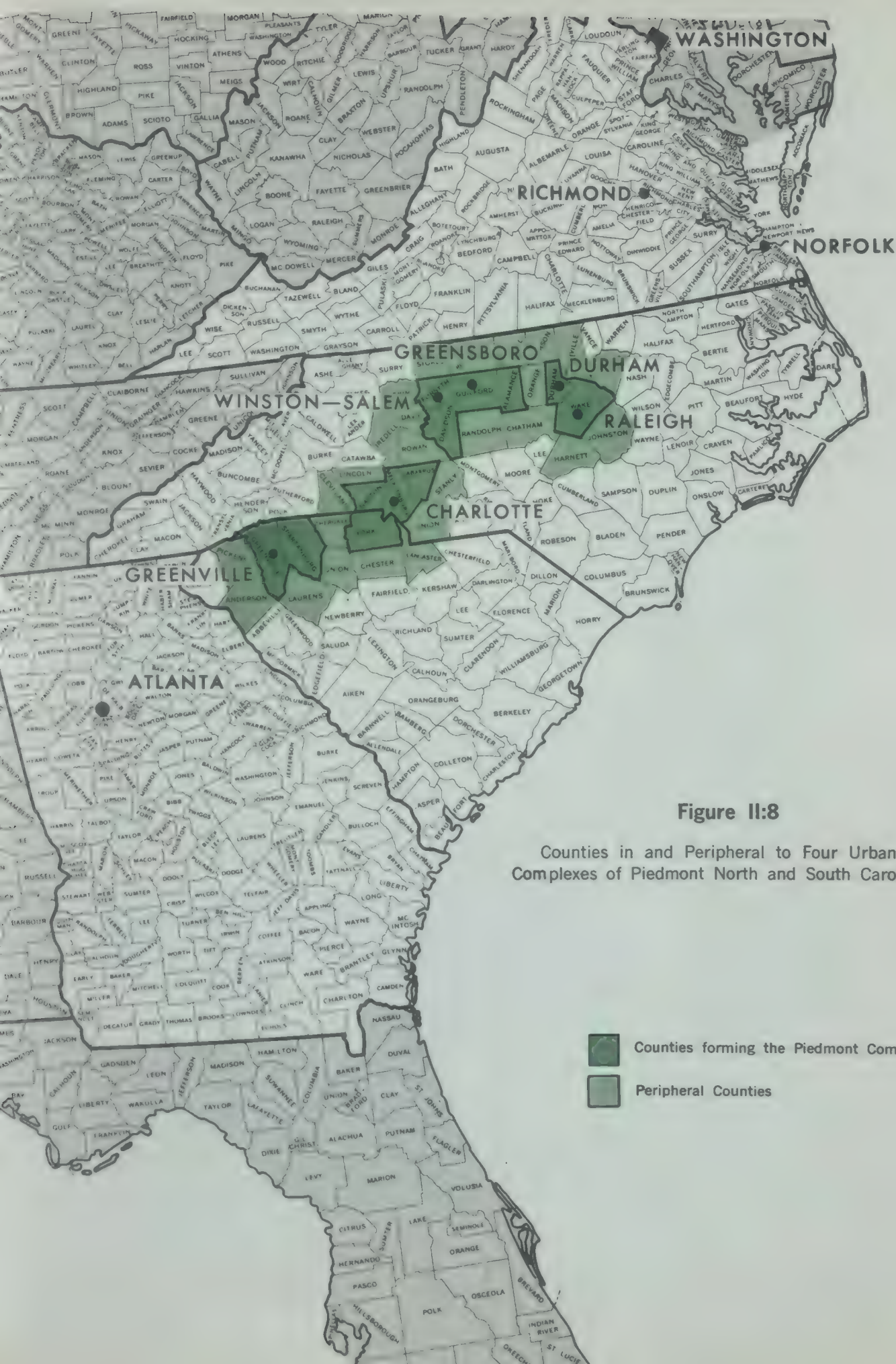


Figure II:8

Counties in and Peripheral to Four Urban Complexes of Piedmont North and South Carolina

- Counties forming the Piedmont Complexes
- Peripheral Counties

TABLE II-3

Population, Effective Buying Income, Civilian Work Force, and Employment -
Counties in or Peripheral to Four Urban Complexes of Piedmont North and
South Carolina

(total income in millions, population, work force, and employment in thousands)

<u>Area</u>	<u>1940 Popu- lation</u>	<u>1967 Popu- lation^a</u>	<u>Change in Pop- ulation</u>	<u>1967 Effective Buying Income Total</u>	<u>1967 Effective Per Household</u>	<u>1967 Civ- ilian Work Force^b</u>	<u>1967 Total Employ- ment^b</u>
Urban Complexes, Total	1,202.6	2,050.4	70.5%	\$5,328.6	\$9,173	996.6	966.3
Charlotte Complex	357.4	633.7	77.3	1,673.4	9,349	311.7	302.5
Cabarrus County	59.4	72.5	22.1	176.9	8,423	42.0	41.3
Gaston County	87.5	138.6	58.4	330.5	8,517	65.6	63.5
Mecklenburg County	151.8	337.3	122.2	997.4	10,261	169.7	164.9
York County	58.7	85.3	45.3	168.6	7,666	34.4	32.8
Greensboro-Winston- Salem Complex	391.2	684.5	75.0	1,833.1	9,334	332.0	322.8
Alamance County	57.4	95.6	66.6	254.6	9,325	45.4	43.9
Davidson County	53.4	92.7	73.6	222.9	8,442	37.5	36.2
Forsyth County	126.5	219.5	73.5	579.3	9,066	99.6	96.8
Guilford County	153.9	276.7	79.8	776.3	9,852	149.5	145.9
Raleigh Complex	189.7	331.6	74.8	866.9	9,454	162.5	157.4
Durham County	80.2	124.6	55.4	333.2	9,466	63.8	61.2
Wake County	109.5	207.0	89.0	533.7	9,445	98.7	96.2
Greenville Complex	264.3	400.6	51.6	955.2	8,394	190.4	183.6
Greenville County	136.6	236.4	73.1	595.2	8,806	111.8	108.0
Spartanburg County	127.7	164.2	28.6	360.0	7,791	78.6	75.6

TABLE II:3 (continued)

Area	1940	1967	Change in Pop- ulation	1967 Effective Buying Income		1967 Civ-	1967 Total
	Popu- lation	Popu- lation ^a		Total	Per Household	ilian Work Force ^b	Employ- ment ^b
Peripheral Counties, Total	1,038.6	1,254.2	20.8%	\$2,523.5	\$7,387	502.7	484.1
Franklin, N.C.	30.4	28.0	-7.9	42.6	6,087	9.0	8.5
Granville	29.3	35.4	20.8	59.6	7,272	12.2	11.7
Person	25.0	28.1	12.4	45.0	6,422	9.9	9.3
Caswell	20.0	19.9	-0.5	28.6	6,212	5.8	5.5
Rockingham	57.9	72.0	24.4	158.9	7,787	31.3	30.2
Stokes	22.7	23.8	4.8	41.2	6,439	6.6	6.2
Yadkin	20.7	24.4	17.9	46.6	6,959	5.9	5.7
Davie	14.9	18.3	22.8	39.9	7,667	6.1	6.0
Iredell	50.4	68.7	36.3	152.9	7,801	32.6	31.8
Lincoln	24.2	31.1	28.5	63.5	7,554	12.0	11.3
Cleveland	58.1	70.5	21.3	128.8	6,927	30.1	29.0
Orange	23.1	49.3	113.4	120.7	9,731	19.2	18.7
Johnston	64.8	60.3	-6.9	97.9	5,967	24.5	23.6
Harnett	44.2	49.4	11.8	86.4	6,698	15.4	14.8
Chatham	24.7	29.0	17.4	52.1	6,761	11.2	10.9
Randolph	44.6	70.9	59.0	165.5	8,032	29.4	28.8
Stanley	32.8	43.7	33.2	95.9	7,670	18.9	18.4
Rowan	69.2	87.8	26.9	212.7	8,243	31.1	30.6
Union	39.0	49.6	27.2	91.1	7,011	17.1	16.3
Surry	41.8	50.6	21.1	103.2	7,165	27.8	26.3
Lancaster, S.C.	33.5	43.6	30.1	82.9	7,339	19.6	18.9
Chester	32.6	30.3	-7.1	49.9	6,397	13.2	12.8
Union	31.4	29.5	-6.1	54.8	7,115	12.6	11.9
Laurens	44.2	49.5	12.0	101.2	7,847	19.4	18.4
Anderson	88.7	102.3	15.3	219.0	7,450	45.2	43.5
Pickens	37.1	51.9	39.9	118.2	7,989	23.4	22.6
Cherokee	33.3	36.3	9.0	64.4	6,509	13.2	12.4
Grand Total	2,241.2	3,304.6	47.4	\$7,852.1	\$8,512	1,499.3	1,450.4

^aEstimated; changes in the rate and pattern of population growth during the 1960's cast some doubt on the accuracy of interim estimates. ^bAnnual average, by location of employment not residence of employee or job-seeker.

Sources: Bureau of the Census; Sales Management; Employment Security Commissions of N.C. and S.C.

To a casual observer, Greensboro does not appear to differ markedly in economic potential from any of several dozen medium-sized cities spread across the United States. For types of economic activity whose market orientation is exclusively national and whose labor requirements are modest, as well as for purely local endeavors, little more than an appraisal of Greensboro proper would be needed to determine its advantages or disadvantages. But for economic activities which 1) are concerned with regional markets and/or 2) must attract a large and varied labor force, exclusive attention to Greensboro would lead to a gross underestimation of both market and labor supply. Urbanization of the total dimensions described, located as close to Greensboro as it is, greatly expands the range of activities which may economically be domiciled here. At the same time, the proximity of other urban centers affords vigorous competition which Greensboro would not face if it were differently located.

GREENSBORO WITHIN ITS OWN COMPLEX

While development in the Piedmont at large is of clear relevance to the economy of Greensboro, the city is most directly affected by the urban complex of which it is part. This complex consists of four counties: Guilford, which contains Greensboro; Forsyth, which contains Winston-Salem; Alamance and Davidson. In the periphery are six counties with lesser degrees of development. These are Davie, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin.

The four counties of Greensboro's complex comprise, together, the largest concentration of population, income and employment between Washington (or Norfolk) and Atlanta. The six peripheral counties add significantly to totals in all three of these dimensions. Even with the inclusion of all ten counties, however, the area described is compact. It is possible to reach one of the two largest cities from almost any place in either the complex proper or the periphery within an hour's drive, and the great majority of the population can reach downtown or a place of employment in Greensboro, Winston-Salem, or High Point within about half an hour.

Some demographic and economic dimensions of the group of counties surrounding Greensboro are given in Table II:4, and the salient characteristics of labor utilization in the area are provided in Table II:5. Again, it would be wrong to suppose that these figures relate to what may, in an exclusive sense, be called the "Greensboro economy." But their magnitudes must be viewed in conjunction with statistics for the city itself in assessing the potential for future development which Greensboro has.

GREENSBORO AND WINSTON-SALEM

Like the central Piedmont in general, the counties immediately surrounding Greensboro show a curious pattern of urban development. They form a kind of honeycomb of urbanization rather than a conventional central city ringed by suburban and outlying tributary areas. Though close to larger places, cities such as High Point, Burlington, Lexington,

TABLE II:4

Population, Income, Work Force, and Employment,
Greensboro/Winston-Salem Urban Complex and Nearby Counties
1962-67

(income in millions, population, work-force, and employment in thousands)

Area	Population ^a			Effective Buying Income		
	1962	1967	% change	1962	1967	% change
Urban Complex	634.3	684.5	7.9%	\$1,284.5	\$1,833.1	42.7%
Alamance County	88.6	95.6	7.9	166.9	254.6	52.5
Davidson County	83.9	92.7	10.5	141.3	222.9	57.7
Forsyth County	201.6	219.5	8.9	424.5	579.3	36.5
Guilford County	260.2	276.7	6.3	551.8	776.3	40.7
Peripheral Group	246.9	260.0	5.3	367.1	555.3	51.3
Davie County	17.1	18.3	7.0	25.0	39.9	59.6
Randolph County	64.6	70.9	9.8	105.3	165.5	57.2
Rockingham County	71.1	72.0	1.3	108.9	158.9	45.9
Stokes County	22.4	23.8	6.3	27.3	41.2	50.9
Surry County	48.8	50.6	3.7	69.6	103.2	48.3
Yadkin County	22.9	24.4	6.6	31.0	46.6	50.3
Total	881.2	944.5	7.2	1,651.6	2,388.4	44.6
Area	Civilian Work Force ^b			Total Employment ^b		
	1962	1967	% change	1962	1967	% change
Urban Complex	289.5	332.0	14.7%	276.8	322.8	16.6%
Alamance County	41.6	45.4	9.1	39.2	43.9	12.0
Davidson County	32.8	37.5	14.3	30.9	36.2	17.2
Forsyth County	89.9	99.6	10.8	86.0	96.8	12.6
Guilford County	125.2	149.5	19.4	120.7	145.9	20.9
Peripheral Group	99.8	107.1	7.3	93.6	103.2	10.3
Davie County	6.0	6.1	1.7	5.8	6.0	3.4
Randolph County	26.1	29.4	12.6	24.6	28.8	17.1
Rockingham County	27.5	31.3	13.8	25.7	30.2	17.5
Stokes County	7.5	6.6	-12.0	7.0	6.2	-11.4
Surry County	26.7	27.8	4.1	24.7	26.3	6.5
Yadkin County	6.0	5.9	-1.7	5.8	5.7	-1.7
Total	389.3	439.1	12.8	370.4	426.0	15.0

^a Estimated as of December 31; changes in the rate and pattern of population growth in North Carolina during the 1960's cast some doubt on the accuracy of interim estimates.

^b Annual average, by location of employment, not residence of employee or job-seeker.

Sources: Sales Management; Employment Security Commission of North Carolina

TABLE II:5

Utilization of the Civilian Work Force, Greensboro/Winston-Salem Urban Complex
and Nearby Counties, 1967

(all figures are annual averages, stated in thousands)

Area	Civilian Work Force ^a	Total Employ- ment ^a	% of Work Force Employed	Manufacturing Employment		Agricultural Employment	Other Non-Manufacturing Employment	
				Number	% of Total		Number	% of Total
Urban Complex	332.0	322.8	97.2%	136.8	42.4%	7.5	178.3	55.2%
Alamance County	45.4	43.9	96.8	23.0	52.4	1.8	19.0	43.3
Davidson County	37.5	36.2	96.4	20.1	55.5	1.4	14.7	40.6
Forsyth County	99.6	96.8	97.2	39.2	40.5	1.5	56.0	57.9
Guilford County	149.5	145.9	97.6	54.5	37.4	2.8	88.6	60.7
Peripheral Group	107.1	103.2	96.4	48.5	47.0	14.4	40.5	39.2
Davie County	6.1	6.0	97.5	2.6	43.3	0.7	2.7	45.0
Randolph County	29.4	28.8	97.9	16.9	58.7	1.7	10.2	35.4
Rockingham County	31.3	30.2	96.6	15.2	50.3	2.9	12.2	40.4
Stokes County	6.6	6.2	94.4	1.1	17.7	3.1	2.1	33.9
Surry County	27.8	26.3	94.7	12.1	46.0	3.8	10.4	39.5
Yadkin County	5.9	5.7	96.8	0.6	10.5	2.2	2.9	50.9
Total	439.1	426.0	97.0	185.3	43.5	21.9	218.8	51.4

^aBy location of employment, not residence of employee or job seeker.

Thomasville, Asheboro, and Reidsville retain distinct identities and attract trade and labor from their immediate environs. The two principal cities, Greensboro and Winston-Salem, are similar in many ways, but they have different past development records and are by no means carbon copies of each other even today.

Winston-Salem became a fair-sized town early in this century and, for a brief period, was the largest city in North Carolina. Its economy was based primarily on tobacco manufacturing and textile industry (including apparel), and its growth was heavily influenced by the presence in the city of the national headquarters of major firms in both these fields. They remain the manufacturing mainstays of Winston-Salem, though other kinds of industrial activity have gained importance, and the city has substantial trade, banking, insurance, educational and medical service sectors.

The growth of Winston-Salem has been erratic. It gained population rapidly from the beginning of the century through about 1930. Thereafter, the city suffered a period of comparative stagnation which lasted into the 1950's. More recently, Winston-Salem has begun again to grow and diversify its economy further.

Greensboro, in 1920, was a town of under 20,000 people. It had a considerable industrial base, principally in textiles, and the beginnings of managerial, professional and services sectors. During the 1920's Greensboro boomed, and its growth was less tied than that of Winston-Salem

to one or two major firms. Development slowed to a crawl during the depression years of the 1930's but resumed at a steady if unspectacular pace during the 1940's and has continued since that time. In general, Greensboro has been a little less dependent than Winston-Salem on manufacturing industry and somewhat more heavily oriented toward services, trade and government, though industrial employment is unusually large as a percentage of total jobs in both cities. Historically, Greensboro was the smaller and the poorer of the two. Today, Greensboro and Winston-Salem are of roughly equal size, and Greensboro has an edge in employment, total income and income per household, as Table II:6 reveals.

The centers of these two cities are only 27 miles apart, and their economies are more nearly competitive than complementary. The failure of economic development in north-central North Carolina to focus clearly on one of the two has probably been the key force which has so far prevented the emergence of a much larger city in this area. Because the growth of each has been slowed to a degree by the presence of the other, neither Greensboro nor Winston-Salem has become big enough to differ markedly from smaller neighbors in the range of urban services and attractions offered. Unlike Charlotte, which today acts as a magnet for population, trade and industry within a densely-populated complex similar to that around Greensboro and Winston-Salem, neither of the latter two cities has drawn to itself a preponderance of area growth forces. Greensboro

TABLE II:6

Population, Effective Buying Income, Civilian Work Force, Employment, and
Cost of Construction Authorized, Greensboro and Winston-Salem

(population, work force, and employment in thousands; total
income and construction cost in millions)

Indicator	Greensboro		Winston-Salem	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Population				
1920	19.9	---	48.4	---
1950	74.4	---	87.8	---
1960	119.6 ^a	---	111.1 ^a	---
1967	136.6 ^b	---	142.0 ^b	---
Effective Buying Income, 1967				
Total	\$ 418.5	---	\$ 378.4	---
Per Household	10,621.0	---	9,075.0	---
Civilian Work Force,				
March, 1969	106.6 ^c	100.0%	103.3 ^c	100.0%
Total Employment,				
March, 1969	105.1 ^c	98.5	100.6 ^c	97.3
Unemployment,				
March, 1969	1.6 ^c	1.5	2.8 ^c	2.7
Manufacturing				
Employment	31.5 ^c	29.5	38.3 ^c	37.1
Textiles and Apparel	15.4 ^c	14.4	11.2 ^c	10.8
Tobacco	2.4 ^c	2.3	12.7 ^c	12.3
All Other manufac-				
turing	13.7 ^c	12.9	14.4 ^c	13.9
Non-manufacturing				
Employment	73.6 ^c	69.0	62.3 ^c	60.3
Government	12.3 ^c	11.5	10.2 ^c	9.9
Trade	20.2 ^c	18.9	14.1 ^c	13.6
All other non-				
manufacturing	41.1 ^c	38.6	38.0 ^c	36.8
Cost of Construction Authorized,				
Cumulated				
1960-1968	\$ 344.1	---	\$ 227.6	---

(continued)

TABLE II:6 (continued)

^aA major city limit expansion by Greensboro between 1950 and 1960 affects the comparison.

^bEstimated; a major city limit expansion by Winston-Salem between 1960 and 1967 affects the comparison.

^cThe Greensboro figures are for the "Greensboro Labor Area" which is Guilford County less the cities of High Point and Jamestown. The Winston-Salem figures are for the "Winston-Salem Labor Area" which is Forsyth County. All employment figures are by location of job.

Sources: Bureau of the Census; Sales Management; Employment Security Commission of North Carolina; North Carolina Department of Labor.

and Winston-Salem have, so far, expanded together with their surroundings at rates only moderately ahead of smaller competitors. The urban complex of which they are part shows a comparatively fast but dispersed growth as a result.

An interesting, and yet unanswered, question is whether Greensboro and Winston-Salem will continue as approximate equals or whether one will outstrip the other and assume the role of metropolis to its urban complex. The lack of a single core city in so densely populated, industrialized and wealthy an area, located far from major cities, may be a disequilibrium situation. If so, Greensboro or Winston-Salem (or possibly a third city) is likely to attain at some point a sufficient measure of leadership to emerge, perhaps suddenly, as metropolis. Should this happen, the leading city could attain a much larger absolute size within a fairly short time. There is no assurance that the metropolis will be Greensboro, but this could be the case. Much of the validity of any assessment of Greensboro's potential must thus hinge on a guess as to the identity of the future central city for the present urban complex.

III

GREENSBORO AS POSSIBLE METROPOLIS:
CERTAIN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

III

GREENSBORO AS POSSIBLE METROPOLIS: CERTAIN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

So far, our argument has held that location near the center of the southeastern Piedmont gives Greensboro unusual potential for growth. Among the benefits conferred by location, four seem to be of critical importance; these are: (1) access to a transportation web which now opens markets in the East, the deep South, and overseas at low cost, and which eventually will lead easily to the Midwest; (2) close proximity to the labor and markets of an economically sophisticated, semi-urban region stretching some 250 miles from Greenville on the southwest to Raleigh on the east; (3) closer by, a share of urban leadership and a chance for primacy in a compact, ten-county area with a 1969 population of some 970,000 and a labor force of about 450,000; and (4) relative independence from the overshadowing influence of major cities, since there are none nearby.

These locational advantages are shared by a number of Piedmont cities, as are a good climate, pleasing topography, and many recreational advantages. Throughout the Piedmont, natural beauty, land, and water are abundant relative to numerous other areas, and Greensboro has no special edge with respect to these. Transportation is good, but Greensboro has no great advantage here either. The city is not eclipsed by giant neighbors, but it does compete vigorously with other urban places, and one rival, Charlotte, is a well-established local leader with a rapidly growing measure

of regional dominance. In its own urban complex, Greensboro shares leadership with Winston-Salem, a rival of nearly equal size whose basic advantages are virtually identical with Greensboro's.

Economic growth in the Carolina Piedmont, over the long-term, has been rapid and reasonably steady. As a consequence, stagnation is not the likely prognosis for a city whose performance is no better than average. But Greensboro has done better than average in the past, and the probable range of its rate of future development appears to extend from the Piedmont average, which is high, up nearly to a "boom town" pace. Should Greensboro lose primacy within its complex to Winston-Salem or another city, growth and prosperity would probably continue, though the rate of expansion would be moderate. Should Greensboro and Winston-Salem continue as near-equals, both would be likely to develop at a rate faster than that of most other Piedmont cities. Should one of the two emerge as the definite leader within the urban complex, it could become one of the principal cities of the Southeast.

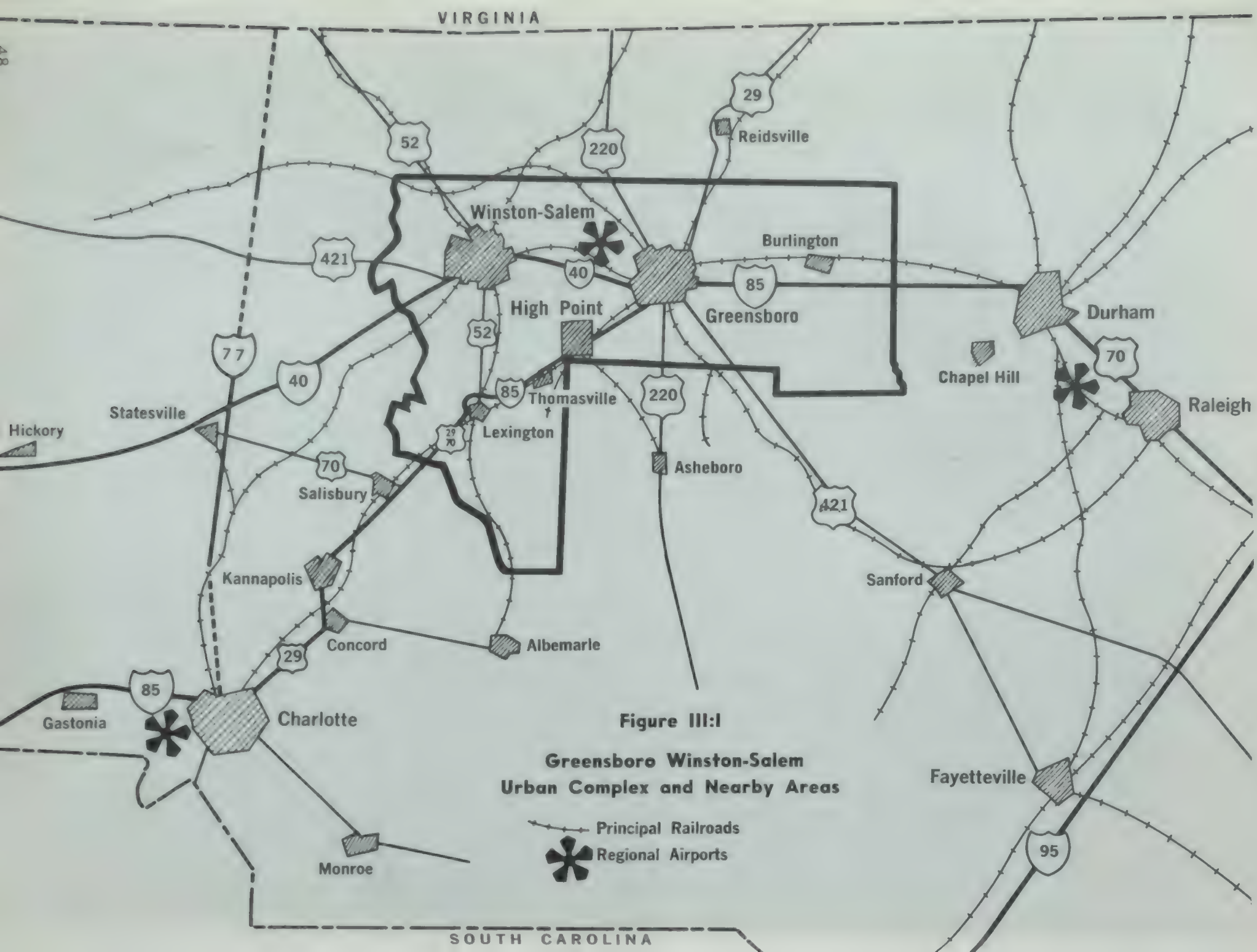
While Greensboro has no unique advantages which predestine it for leadership, neither do unique obstacles block the growth of the city. In assessing the Greensboro potential, it is necessary to deal in terms of comparatively slim margins of advantage or disadvantage. These margins may very well arise as much from city policy as from objective conditions. It seems probable that what Greensboro does both to promote itself and to create a more nearly optimal environment for development will, in the end, prove crucial.

This chapter does not recommend specific policy measures for Greensboro. It does, however, seek to isolate advantages which, in all cases, could be developed further and to single out disadvantages which call for corrective action. Attention centers mainly on Greensboro's position within its own urban complex, for pre-eminence here must precede emergence as metropolis to a larger region.

AREAS OF RELATIVE ADVANTAGE

Location and Transportation Once More

Shown in Figure III:1 are the four counties of the Greensboro / Winston-Salem urban complex and adjacent areas. Within the complex and its environs, Greensboro enjoys a slight locational advantage. In particular, because of the highway pattern, the average driving time to Greensboro for most of the population of the complex is less than that to Winston-Salem or High Point. The locational edge becomes more pronounced when it is recalled that the Virginia border counties of Henry and Pittsylvania, with a combined population exceeding 160,000 (including independent cities), communicate a little more readily with Greensboro than with Winston-Salem. Some further advantage is afforded by the closer proximity of Greensboro to the Raleigh complex on the east. To the south, the Charlotte complex is closer to both High Point and Winston-Salem than to Greensboro, but with the present highway system driving times from Charlotte to Winston-Salem and Greensboro are almost the same.



Also indicated on the map is the location of the regional airport at Friendship just outside Greensboro. While Winston-Salem maintains a field with limited commercial service, the Friendship facility provides the principal air link with the rest of the nation. Growth of traffic at the regional airport has been favorable and service to it has become better over recent years. All the surrounding cities benefit from access to a good airport, but its location at the edge of Greensboro affords a small additional convenience to that city.

Educational Facilities

Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and the other principal towns of the urban complex have fair to good public school systems. Basic support from the state and sizeable amounts of local funds maintain schools which are significantly better than those in the rural areas and smaller towns of North Carolina and the rest of the Southeast. Greensboro and Winston-Salem have school systems which are enough alike in character and quality to make it doubtful that either has much advantage over the other. In vocational education, both cities have special facilities for training in and beyond the high school. Neither city has a community college, but institutions located a few miles away are accessible to residents of both.

A distinct Greensboro advantage appears in higher education. Five sizeable institutions offer college programs in the city. These include three private schools, Bennett College, Greensboro College, and Guilford

College, and two state universities, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. All five make available four-year curricula leading to the bachelor's degree. The two universities offer master's degree programs, and The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, third largest of six campuses of the state university system, offers graduate work through the doctoral level.

The combined enrollment of these colleges and universities for the 1968-69 school year was in excess of 13,000. Growth in enrollment, particularly on the Greensboro campus of The University of North Carolina, has been rapid. Graduates of the institutions provide a large annual flow of trained personnel, and the direct economic impact of the educational establishment on the city is both large and growing.

Winston-Salem also has a substantial educational sector, including undergraduate colleges and one university, Wake Forest, which offers graduate training in medicine, law, and several other fields. But to the extent that a large and diverse system of higher education is important in attracting sophisticated economic activities, enriching cultural life and providing demand for a wide variety of goods and services, Greensboro must be accorded a distinct advantage over Winston-Salem and most other Piedmont cities as well.

Access to Financial Resources and Services

Greensboro and neighboring cities have the usual range of financial services found in places of their general size class. Institutions in all of them are in close communication with the financial markets of the nation, and transactions of almost any size can readily be accommodated.

But Greensboro and Winston-Salem each has a particular advantage not possessed by most other cities of their size. Winston-Salem is headquarters to the largest commercial bank in the Southeast, the Wachovia Bank and Trust Company. This traces mainly to the fact that North Carolina permits statewide branch banking and extensive branching plus a permissive attitude toward mergers has produced several unusually large banks. The Wachovia, with 1968 assets in excess of \$1.4 billion, is the largest of these. Greensboro, in its turn, has an unusual concentration of life insurance activity. Two large companies, the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company and the Pilot Life Insurance Company, are the chief components of an insurance-based group of enterprises whose total assets substantially exceed \$1 billion. A third Greensboro company, Southern Life, is also sizeable and growing.

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Greensboro, with jurisdiction over savings and loan associations in the District of Columbia and seven states, adds an unusual dimension to the financial structure of the city. Large local savings and loan associations, investment and brokerage firms, and other specialized intermediaries broaden the range of facilities and

services available, and six commercial banks serve Greensboro. Overall, the magnitude and diversity of financial institutions and services make it unlikely that an enterprise headquartered in Greensboro would encounter many financial matters which could not be handled locally, and this must be counted as a developmental advantage.

The Presence of a Managerial-Professional Class

While it cannot quite be called a "home office city" as opposed to a "branch plant city," Greensboro comes close. It has, as a consequence, a concentration of managerial and professional talent which is unusual for a small city. This is most pronounced in textiles and apparel, as three firms of this type which rank among the 500 largest industrial corporations in the United States are domiciled in Greensboro. These are Burlington Industries, the world's largest textile enterprise; Cone Mills Corporation; and Blue Bell Incorporated. A number of smaller textile or apparel manufacturers and a semi-autonomous division of J.P. Stevens and Company are also headquartered here. Much Greensboro labor is employed in textile manufacturing, and in this the city is like many others in the South. But the concentration of executive and staff functions is unusual and is large enough to place Greensboro among the leading centers of textile management in the nation.

Beyond textiles, Greensboro has, as already was noted, a major life insurance industry. Supporting facilities for this and some property,

casualty, and credit insurance operations are also found in the city. In other fields, the executive offices of Carolina Steel Corporation, Boren Clay Products Company, Wysong and Miles, Gilbarco, Inc., and a number of other substantial enterprises are in or near Greensboro. Here, too, are a large manufacturing and research installation of P. Lorillard and Company, a regional mail order plant of Sears Roebuck, and the home offices of several large construction firms. Being built just outside Greensboro is a multi-million dollar research and engineering facility of Western Electric and Bell Telephone Laboratories.

In combination with higher education, the executive offices and research installations give Greensboro an unusual proportion of managerial and professional persons. The successful exercise of executive functions from Greensboro over a now considerable span of years suggests that this is an advantageous location for regional or national headquarters of enterprises in a number of different fields. Expansion of the managerial-professional sector of the city's economy is, of course, much to be desired, and the presence here of an already large executive group is an important competitive advantage in recruiting additions to it.

Labor Force

The civilian labor force in the immediate Greensboro labor market area (Guilford County excluding High Point and environs) was in March, 1969, about 107,000 people. Including those neighboring areas which we have considered to be part of the urban complex and its periphery, the labor force totaled about

450,000. The labor force is a high percentage of the total population in these counties, and there has been little overt unemployment for some years.

The great majority of workers in or near Greensboro find jobs outside agriculture and other kinds of primary activities. The largest source of employment by far is manufacturing industry. Over the past several decades, natural increase and in-migration of workers have combined to produce a moderately rapid increase of population and labor supply in the urban complex, and Greensboro's share of the complex total has risen. Despite growth of the labor force, there has been recurring talk of a "labor shortage" in the city and in the complex. Unless in-migration accelerates or job increases diminish, there is unlikely to be much surplus labor in Greensboro over the next few years. The city's share of employment and labor force totals for the urban complex is likely to continue to rise, though the differential between the Greensboro expansion rate and that of the complex will depend heavily on whether the former begins clearly to emerge as primary growth center for the larger entity.

The extent to which labor supply can be counted as a factor favorable to rapid development in Greensboro and its urban complex is not clear, for this area's large, almost fully employed and moderately growing working population will present a different face to different kinds of prospective employers. Manpower and its use are sufficiently important matters to warrant extended treatment, and Chapter IV of this study gives a more detailed consideration

of them. On net balance, the labor situation is probably more of an advantage than a disadvantage. In particular, the opportunities afforded to new high-productivity, high-wage employers seem attractive. These are likely to be able to bid away as many trained or semi-trained workers as they need from present jobs which pay less. Such employers obviously have more to offer the city and the complex by way of a contribution to long-range development than those who might be attracted by a large pool of available and low-wage labor.

The Existing Industrial Structure ✓

Closely related to the influences exerted by a large managerial-professional group and by the size and nature of the labor force are those emanating from the present industrial structure of Greensboro and surrounding areas. The heavy concentration of manufacturing in the urban complex would seem to favor the creation of additional industrial jobs. In part, this will come from expansion of existing enterprises, but this should be substantially augmented by an inflow of investment in activities not now heavily represented here. The attractiveness of Greensboro and the complex is tempered by the lack of large supplies of low-wage labor, as has already been mentioned, but this is not the handicap that it once might have been.

Low-wage labor is also scarce elsewhere, and it is becoming less and less significant even to those industries which have traditionally relied heavily on it. The size and progressiveness of present enterprises plus the advantages

of location near established centers of the basic Piedmont industries will doubtless permit some expansion of textiles, apparel, and furniture--certainly in terms of value of output and perhaps in terms of employment. The outlook for tobacco manufacturing, the fourth great Piedmont industry, is less favorable. Outside these long-established industries, the Greensboro area would seem particularly attractive to firms which (1) require labor which is already disciplined, easily retrainable, and moderate in cost; or (2) need quick and economical access to southern and eastern markets. Also, because the industrial sector is already large, supporting apparatus for industry such as truck and rail transport facilities, financial institutions, utilities and governments accustomed to dealing with the problems of manufacturing enterprises are highly developed in Greensboro and the complex, and this is a decided advantage.

Government and Urban Development

North Carolina has a favorable governmental record which benefits Greensboro as well as the rest of the state. The city itself also has a past record of good government.¹ In particular, Greensboro's progress in plan-

¹ In very recent times, however, the Greensboro record has been marred by several major difficulties. It failed to win inclusion in the federal "model cities" program which would have accelerated redevelopment. It is the subject of severe criticism and faces possible sanctions by the federal government because of the slow pace of integration in some of its public schools. And, within the city, there is strong opposition to continuing the present system of electing all city councilmen at large instead of by ward. Further difficulties in maintaining the pace of progress have been caused by turnover of executive and planning personnel. While there is no apparent lessening of interest in orderly and rational civic improvement, the city in 1969 gave the impression more of coasting on the momentum of past change than of moving ahead in an imaginative and innovative way.

ning the physical aspects of growth and in beginning to make over residential slums have been impressive. In these matters the city may properly be considered a leader in the Southeast, and it seems to compare favorably with most cities of comparable size throughout the nation. The city government has been deeply involved in planning and redevelopment; collaboration among the city, county, state and federal governments has been reasonably close, and most of the time, it has been free of acrimonious disputes. Despite occasional "revolts," citizens of Greensboro and Guilford County have shown themselves willing to accept added taxation and borrowing to finance new services or public works, and the news media have been constructive and responsible in their evaluations of the city's needs and measures for coping with them.

More impressive than any other phase of the city's improvement program has been progress in demolition of substandard residential and commercial structures outside the central business district and replacement of these with modern properties. Since its beginning in 1958, Greensboro's urban renewal program has seen seven projects begun which together cover an area of more than 600 acres. Others are now in the planning stage, including a massive renewal program for the downtown area. Neither the projects in progress nor those being planned will altogether eliminate slum housing or dilapidated commercial buildings, but the magnitude of the program and the consistency with which it has been pursued for more than a decade are unusual and encouraging.

To a lesser degree, the same can be said of programs for improvement of streets and highways, creation of parks, playgrounds and other recreational facilities, and expansion of utilities and services. Greensboro is a city in which traffic moves well most of the time; it has green areas and places for children to play; it has an assured water supply for a long time to come; and it has good fire, police, and general city services. In all of these areas improvement is needed, but the programs for betterment continue, and the gains already made are real. This city, like others in North Carolina, badly needs more freedom to manage its own affairs and, especially, more revenue is needed from a broader spectrum of sources. But, within the constraints imposed by a tight budget, Greensboro has done a good job. In the future, much money and much determination will be needed for continuation of Greensboro's past record of improvement, but improvement at an accelerated pace will be required if city policy is to continue to be a "plus" in the economic development ledger.

SOME GREENSBORO DISADVANTAGES

Natural Resources

Greensboro, its urban complex, and the Piedmont Carolinas in general have grown economically despite a comparatively narrow resource base. Location and climate have been the chief natural resources, and though the definition of a "natural resource" changes as development creates new industries,

products, processes and knowledge, future growth seems unlikely to be based on unique agricultural or mineral resources. Some expansion of agricultural production will doubtless occur, particularly in those activities which supply local markets. Some growth of agriculture-based manufacturing in such fields as meat packing and other kinds of food processing may also be anticipated. But no major development seems likely to be based on the agricultural resources of the Piedmont. Production of minerals is insignificant at the present time, and, barring new discoveries, this will continue to be true.

To a recognition of the lack of rich agricultural or mineral resources in the Piedmont should be coupled an addendum which is particularly troublesome for Greensboro. Because of the precise location of the city, its access to large supplies of low-cost water is poorer than is true of most other cities in the Southeast. Greensboro has been able, so far, to assure an ample water supply for its private citizens and for industrial and general business users. Facilities already in existence, those under construction and those definitely planned will give the city enough water for normal uses for decades to come. But water will not be overwhelmingly abundant, and it will not be cheap. Industries requiring unusually large amounts of water are unlikely candidates for location in Greensboro unless they are of such a nature that the water can be reused again and again.

Something of the same thing is true in the case of industries which face major problems of waste disposal. There are no streams near Greensboro capable of carrying away large amounts of waste materials without creating intolerable pollution. Moreover, the density of population in the city and in counties nearby

is such that large-scale dumping of obnoxious wastes would not be feasible. This same density of population, combined with meteorological conditions, make disposal of waste through burning impractical if the amounts of waste involved are large.

Difficulties with waste disposal confront most localities throughout the nation, and Greensboro's can hardly be called acute. But the problem does exist and must be recognized. Further, it must be firmly stated that ignorance or defiance of waste disposal difficulties in Greensboro will result in pollution which could quickly destroy the inherent attractiveness of the city's physical environment. Tolerance of objectionable disposal practices will certainly prove highly uneconomic for the city in the long-run, for the ultimate cost in lost future advantage would far outweigh whatever temporary gains might be had through winking at disposal problems. Inter-governmental cooperation in pollution control and resolution of disposal difficulties within the urban complex and beyond its limits is much to be encouraged.

Transportation

Mention has been made of the advantages flowing from Greensboro's railway and highway transportation network. These advantages are real, and, on the whole, easy and economical transport has a favorable effect on the city's development. But transportation difficulties which are significant enough to constitute a brake on growth also exist.

Most serious among these is the relatively poor access which the city has to areas of the country beyond the Appalachians, a problem which has existed ever since settlement moved beyond the mountains. The most striking weakness is in motor transport. There has never been, and there is not today, an adequate highway linking Greensboro to the trans-Appalachian region. A solution to this problem is, however, at last in sight, and Greensboro stands ultimately to be in a good position. Interstate Highway 40, which begins in Greensboro and will extend to California when complete, promises a first-class route west. Interstate Highway 77, when complete, will intersect I-40 not many miles from Greensboro and will provide good access to the Midwest. But neither of these highways is finished, nor will they be for some years. In the meantime, the lack of convenient motor routes to the west and northwest is a disadvantage.

Another east-west highway problem is the lack of direct and rapid access from Greensboro to the sea. Because of an unfortunate omission in the plan of the interstate highway network, Interstate 40 terminates at its junction with Interstate 85 in Greensboro. Had this route been extended eastward to the North Carolina coast, access from the Piedmont to the ports, particularly from Greensboro to Wilmington and Morehead City, would have been improved, to the great benefit of both middle and eastern North Carolina. As it is, the U. S. and state highways which do go east from Greensboro to the coast are partially two-lane and none is a truly first-class route. There has been much discussion of this problem and

the state seems firmly committed to solving it, but relief is still some years away. This is a serious fault in the transportation system and should be eradicated as soon as possible.

Like highway transportation, air transportation is much poorer to the west and northwest from Greensboro than it is to the northeast or southwest. Unlike the highway problem, that of air transport is relatively easy to solve, and the next year or two should witness a great improvement in air service. The planning authority for the regional airport at Friendship has been farsighted in its approach to air transport needs. Airlines serving the area have been reasonably cooperative, though considerable increases in the number of carriers and flights seems justified. Because of a favorable growth rate in passenger and freight traffic at the regional airport, and because the weakness of schedules is increasingly apparent, this gap in the transportation system seems likely to be closed. As long as it exists, however, it is a significant flaw.

The "Quiet City": A Greensboro Syndrome

Americans nostalgically praise towns and the countryside, and great numbers of them choose to live in suburbs, but the preferred "atmosphere" is urban, most of all "big city" urban. The satisfactions sought differ among individuals, income groups, and socio-economic classes, but for almost all, proximity to a large city promises excitement, diversity, tolerance, opportunity and other stimulations which cannot be had elsewhere. Concentration of population and economic

activity in major metropolitan areas continues and is undeniable evidence of urban magnetism.²

Many of the attractions of the city are based almost as much on relative size as on absolute size. A smallish city located far from others often acquires a cosmopolitanism not found in larger places if the latter are overshadowed by nearby giants. In this respect, Greensboro is a curious and, in some ways, unfortunate case. Though it is not eclipsed by huge neighbors, neither is it the sole hub of a populous hinterland to which it plays the role of the "the big town." As a consequence, Greensboro is not particularly "citified." It would attract more attention and reap considerable developmental advantage were it not so nearly like several other places in the same general vicinity.

The Greensboro milieu and personality do little to give distinctiveness to the city. They are not displeasing, but they are nondescript. A good many people who know Greensboro would describe it as "comfortable," "relaxed," and, in spots, "beautiful." Hardly anybody would call the city "exciting," "vibrant," or "colorful"; and it is hard to imagine a resident or visitor advising a friend to "Go to Greensboro; that's where the action is!" Should anyone actually make this improbable statement, the likely response would be: "Go where?"

²Even the abysmal job which Americans have done in planning cities, financing them and dealing with the incredibly complex problems of heavy migration to metropolitan areas has not succeeded in killing love for the urban way of life. True, nobody wants to live in or near the ghettos, but nobody ever did, and the "country" is still seen as a nice place to visit, but few really want to stay there.

North Carolina cities are not large enough or distinctive enough to be well known outside a limited area. Within this and nearby states, however, Charlotte is known as the largest city and something of a boom town; Raleigh is recognized as the capital; Asheville is known to be a resort; Winston-Salem has cigarettes named for it; and Chapel Hill is the seat of a distinguished university. Even fairly close by, Greensboro has a muted voice and a hazy image. Outside the immediate area, and particularly outside the Southeast, persons who recognize the name are prone to classify this as just another southern mill town, probably under 50,000 in population.

The personality of a city is probably of no great importance in determining the basic advantages to a business enterprise of locating there and is not necessarily a crucial variable in determining its virtues as a place to make a home. But personality does have effects in both of these contexts. Care in site selection is exercised today by businesses to a greater degree than ever before, and less is left to chance or whim. But even expert selectors are not infallible, and a measure of renown and good repute help to get a city noticed. Prospective employee in-migrants are much less well-informed about localities than are prospective employers. They are, moreover, less inclined to calculate in terms of hard economic magnitudes and more easily swayed by what they hear (or do not hear) about a city.

Establishment of a distinctive image of the right kind is doubly important for a southern city. Outside the South--and sometimes even

within it--there is less than the highest esteem for this area's potential as a place to work and live. Climate is a favorable factor, but a strong and deep-seated antipathy to other southern attributes (actual or imagined) is shared by professionals, managers and blue collar workers alike. Racial strife, poor schools, social and economic conservatism, religious fundamentalism, low wages and shabby politics, among other things, are popularly identified with the South and predispose persons unfamiliar with it to stay out. For a long time, many of the ablest southerners also have left the region because they, too, rated other areas more favorably.

To all but the least informed critics, however, "the South" is not seen as homogeneous. Its rural areas are anathema to almost everyone, including their own progeny. But urban places receive more favorable attention. And certain cities such as Atlanta, New Orleans and Miami escape the shadow of the dismal southern stereotype. Rightly or wrongly, the state of North Carolina is also regarded as an exception to the worst generalizations made about the region in which it is located. The strength of this differentiation is not great, but the distinction is present, and North Carolina's cities benefit from this as well as from preferences for the urban as opposed to the rural environment. But to gain maximum advantage, a place must be thought of as a city. Greensboro's failure to establish a firm reputation as a thriving, progressive and sizeable place creates a moderate but significant margin of disadvantage from a developmental standpoint.

Labor Force

The labor situation in Greensboro has been held to be, on net account, an advantage. Present in it, nonetheless, are negative elements. Chief among these are low educational levels, a predominance of unskilled or semi-skilled labor, insufficient facilities--in the school system and outside it--for upgrading and retraining labor, discrimination in hiring which lowers labor force participation and misuses much available ability, lack of sufficient capacity to train professional and managerial personnel at top skill levels and a seemingly insufficient rate of growth of the labor force. Problems of jobs and workers to fill them constitute the subject matter of Chapter IV and need only be mentioned here.

The Drag of Downtown

Few, if any, of Greensboro's physical aspects are less inviting than its central business district, and corrective action has been begun with most of those which are more odious. Likewise, it would be hard to find an economic sector which contributes less to the overall vitality and drive of the city than the group of "center city functions." The downtown problem is not unique to Greensboro, and there are rays of hope in the present set of circumstances. But until the central business district is again alive, interesting and functional, it will be a drag on development. The set of downtown difficulties is both intricate and of crucial importance to Greensboro's future; because of this, Chapter V is allocated to downtown.

IV

JOBS AND WORKERS:
THE CORE OF DEVELOPMENT

JOBS AND WORKERS: THE CORE OF DEVELOPMENT

JOBS, MANPOWER, AND GROWTH

In Greensboro, as in almost every other city, the bulk of income comes from paid employment rather than from profits, rents or other forms of proprietors' incomes.¹ Because this is true, the economic future of the city depends heavily on (1) the number and quality of jobs available, and (2) the number and quality of workers available to fill these positions. As we shall see, these two sets of employment variables are not independent on each other.

As the United States grows economically, and as the Southeast grows even more rapidly, jobs are created through expansion of existing activities and through the emergence of new enterprises and new occupations. But it is rare for the specific locations of jobs to be determined by inherent properties of the growth process. Several different locations may often be almost equally logical in terms of such matters as geography,

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce figures show that 69.4% of the income received in the Greensboro-High Point Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area in 1929 was received as wages or salaries. This percentage was 72.3% in 1962. These figures compare with 58.7% for the United States in 1929 and 66.7% in 1962. Separate figures for Greensboro-High Point have not been published for more recent years, but a 1966 percentage is available for the new Greensboro-High Point-Winston-Salem SMSA (Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, and Yadkin Counties); it is 71.8%, compared with a U.S. figure of 67.4%. For details see Survey of Current Business, May, 1967 and August, 1968.

market potential and adequacy of infrastructure. Availability of the types of manpower needed can, however, be highly variable from one otherwise acceptable location to another, particularly when the national economy is operating near its full employment level. Availability of manpower thus can become a critical determinant of location, and its influence is likely to be greatest on those new and expanding activities which form the leading edge of economic growth.

Conversely, manpower resources are mobile whereas natural resources and many kinds of fixed capital installations are not, and manpower is susceptible of almost unlimited improvement. The advantages of a particular location must be weighed not only in terms of its existing stock of human resources but also in terms of its chances for generating, attracting and retaining new supplies of those skills required to carry on the activity considering it. Inter-occupational mobility is often as important in this context as is geographic mobility. An integral part of the process of economic development is the continual upgrading, through movement from one job to another, of those persons who are capable of increasing their productivity or whose capabilities are under-utilized in present employments.

A locality which performs well in total or per capita income growth must move rapidly along several paths within an interdependent process of development. Long-range economic progress hinges in part on the ability to attract enterprises which will provide new employment. At the same time, the expansion and qualitative improvement of present sources of jobs

must be encouraged. To accommodate both of these, the environment must be conducive to growth of the labor force and there must also be a steady flow of presently employed persons into new positions of higher productivity and higher income. The latter implies that facilities must be present for the training and retraining of those individuals whose inherent capabilities make it possible for them to create more value--and thus earn higher incomes--than they are doing in their present jobs. New entrants to the labor force and employed persons seeking better jobs must also possess a mix of skills appropriate to filling the new positions which become available through time. Within the context of this dynamic process, a large pool of unemployed workers is neither necessary nor desirable, though continual augmentation of the labor force may be advantageous, and continual improvement in its quality is essential. It is obvious, but merits repetition, that there is no place in an optimal growth environment for discrimination based upon race, age, sex, religion or other characteristics unless these are relevant to effective performance.

Also clear, but easily overlooked, is the fact that upgrading of general productivity and mean income per person does not require that every new job be comparable to the best already available or even that it be "better than average." Within any fixed total number of jobs an increase in average productivity and average income will result from the elimination of a job if the worker concerned shifts into a new job of higher productivity and income, even though the latter may still be below the average for all jobs.

If the total number of jobs is expanding, either of two additional kinds of change can increase per capita income in a community. One of these is the

employment of persons who were formerly idle. Since whatever such an individual can earn is a net addition to total income, per capita income must increase, even if the previously unemployed person takes a job which is low in productivity and low in compensation. The other way of improving average income within the context of expanding employment is to add new jobs whose rate of compensation is greater than the previous average for the group.

In all cases, the "rate of compensation" must be carefully viewed. Hourly rates of pay are not always the best measures of compensation over an extended period, for the regularity of employment is as important as the rate paid per hour. Moderate hourly wages and steady work are often preferable to higher hourly rates in kinds of employment which are subject to extreme seasonal oscillations or which suffer exaggerated swings in numbers employed when the national level of economic activity fluctuates.²

Applications to Greensboro

The discussion above, while seemingly abstract, is quite relevant to the future of the Greensboro economy. Much of Greensboro's manufacturing sector, and especially its textile and apparel industries, are often almost ignored in discussions of the "desirable" areas for expansion of employment. The chief reason for this is that these industries do not pay

²Even when the total number of dollars received is the same, a stable flow of income is often more advantageous to an individual or a community than a widely variable income stream.

particularly well, either on an hourly or an annual basis. Suggestions for increasing the number of jobs in manufacturing generally emphasize attempts to attract types of industry with higher pay rates than those which have been traditional to Greensboro and to the Piedmont in general. There is no denying that, if a clear choice between an industry with high annual rates of pay for production workers and one with lower wage scales exists, the nod should be given to the former. But this is not always the choice which is open. In some cases, both could be had; in others, only the low-paying industry is available. In either instance, the low-paying industry may play a highly constructive role in the city's over-all growth.

Low rates of pay are generally accurate--though not infallible--reflections of low levels of labor productivity, especially in an economy where workers are highly mobile. Within a private enterprise economy this will continue to be true, though as time passes what constitutes "low" productivity or a "low" rate of pay undergoes a profound transformation. These are valuable kinds of jobs, for they offer opportunities for employment to many who are just entering the labor force, to occasional workers, to second and third income recipients in families, and to those who lack the training or ability for higher productivity positions. Even as permanent sources of employment, some proportion of low-paying industries is desirable, for the opportunities which these afford are frequently superior to the limited alternatives open to the low-productivity workers whom they are likely to employ in large numbers.

It would be dangerous, however, to fail to recognize that enterprises in which labor productivity is low--for whatever reasons--have a vested

interest in resisting pay increases and limiting movement of their work forces into higher productivity jobs. At many times in the past, and sometimes even today, they have tried hard to keep new employers out of an area. Rather consistently also they have opposed unionization and many sorts of social and economic reform. In the long run, this is likely to be a futile and self-defeating policy for the enterprises concerned, and it is potentially disastrous for communities which they dominate. Workers are not bond servants, nor are they politically impotent. Those whose abilities are poorly utilized through lack of appropriate opportunities at home will look elsewhere. No pool of low-cost labor will necessarily accumulate. Furthermore, it is probable that those workers who are ablest and best educated will move first, leaving only those whose limited skills and abilities relegate them to low productivity employment.

The Employment Mix

Probably the greatest risk of error in thinking about the appropriate employment mix for a developing community lies in the temptation to emphasize too strongly one portion of that mix. Sustained growth is likely to demand the development of job opportunities over a broad spectrum, with a need always to match the capabilities of the stream of new workers with the requirements imposed by the stream of new jobs. Continual elimination of the lowest productivity activities and replacement of them by kinds of employment offering higher incomes is to be sought, but it must be matched by corresponding improvement of the productive capabilities of the labor force.

Figures comparable to those given in Table IV:1 are not readily available for Greensboro alone, but it seems unlikely that they would differ greatly from county figures. The city is somewhat less dependent upon manufacturing, has a higher percentage of employment in construction, trade, and government, and has a greater concentration of service occupations than does the county at large, but county data are reasonably representative of the city as well.

Neither are figures comparable to those in Table IV:1 available for years more recent than 1960, although a new set of data should emerge from the 1970 census. Statistics collected by the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina can be had, and estimates from this source of the labor force, total employment, and the composition of employment in 1960 and in 1968 are reproduced in Table IV:2. Here, the figures given are for the "Greensboro labor market area", which includes all of Guilford County except the industrial city of High Point and its smaller neighbor, Jamestown. Roughly two-thirds of the county's population is included in the Greensboro labor market area, but the city and its immediate environs account for such a large share of the area totals that they may be considered as virtually identical.

Within the Greensboro labor market area, as in Guilford County, the employment characteristic which is most distinctive is the high proportion of the labor force engaged in manufacturing. This proportion is higher than for the United States at large, and is considerably higher than in the center of many other urbanized areas. Manufacturing, moreover, tended to maintain

a relatively constant share of the total employment in Greensboro and environs during the 1960's. This strong and dynamic manufacturing base is the principal foundation of the city's considerable recent prosperity, and continued strong support from this source is needed to sustain the momentum of the city's development. But the relative prominence of manufacturing in and around Greensboro also raises a question as to whether the most promising growth sectors in the metropolitan economy may not lie outside the already well-established industrial complex.

The significance of this question becomes clearer when it is realized that despite the importance which attaches to manufacturing in the process of economic development, this field does not, in general, provide the best-paying positions within the national economy. Production workers in manufacturing are often well paid, but their average incomes do not compare favorably with those in a number of other kinds of employment. Careful attention to non-manufacturing sectors is, therefore, in order for an area seeking rapid future development, particularly if that area already possesses a highly developed manufacturing base. Additional production-worker jobs should be sought, but other occupations should receive at least equal emphasis in planning for development. In Greensboro, careful attention should certainly be paid to other key sectors.

Wholesale and Retail Trade

Even a cursory look at the population and income of geographic areas within easy range of Greensboro-based trading firms suggests that the city's potential as a distributive center has barely been scratched. This

traces once more to the fact that no city has yet emerged as metropolis for the urban region of which Greensboro is a part. Failure of any one city to draw to itself the bulk of the distributive functions performed in north-central North Carolina has had several adverse effects on the area's trade sector. In the case of retail trade, there has not been, in one place, an assured base for large-scale stores. Nor has there been a base for the emergence of a wide range of speciality retailers. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this has been aggravated in Greensboro itself by a past cycle of boom and bust in the growth of the downtown shopping area and by an unusually diffuse pattern of urban development within the city.

Aggravating the situation also has been the ethnic homogeneity of Greensboro or, more accurately, its dichotomy into internally similar White and Black ethnic groups. This has limited the range of demands presented to retailers. Another factor is failure of Greensboro's newspapers, radio stations and television stations to establish themselves as the leading sources of information and advertising media within the urban complex.

Some of these circumstances are changing. The size of Greensboro proper is approaching dimensions which will support large-scale retail operations and a multiplicity of specialty stores, provided that the excessive proliferation of small "just alike" shopping centers can be slowed and vigor can be restored to downtown. In-migration from other parts of the nation is also bringing people whose tastes in food, clothing and other consumption goods are less like those of long-time residents or immigrants from other parts of North Carolina and the Southeast. The communications media are

still a serious weakness, and here there is less evidence of improvement. Whether an effort by Greensboro media to become the dominant means of disseminating information and advertising within the metropolitan region would or would not be successful cannot be forecast. But, thus far, they have not seriously attempted to do so, and this inhibits not only their own growth but that of the city's trading sector as well.

In wholesaling, much of what has been said about retail trade can be repeated. Greensboro is a sizeable center for the wholesale distribution of goods, yet it is far from realizing its full potential. Neither Winston-Salem nor High Point approaches Greensboro's volume of wholesale trade, but their presence nearby has probably slowed the growth rate of this sector. Dispersion of wholesaling has prevented one city from becoming the principal distribution point for the metropolitan region and populous areas farther afield. Wholesaling functions which might logically be located in Greensboro or another city in the complex tend to gravitate instead toward Charlotte and, in lesser numbers, toward Durham, Raleigh, and Asheville. The Greensboro-High Point-Winston-Salem area thus loses enterprises and jobs as well as suffering considerable inconvenience in obtaining specialty goods, spare parts and, on occasion, even general merchandise.

Neither Greensboro nor any of the other principal towns of its urban region seems to have inherent defects of location, transportation, or manpower with respect to wholesale trade. Promotion designed to publicize Greensboro's advantages as a focal point for wholesale distribution is likely to pay large dividends, for the city's advantages as a distributive point are considerable.

Strengthening of the Greensboro communications media, already discussed in the context of stimulating retail trade, would provide an added impetus to wholesaling as well.

Amenities For The Transient and The Resident

It seems improbable that Greensboro will ever enjoy a large tourist trade. There are no natural wonders in the immediate vicinity. Neither are there historic sites or man-made attractions which may be expected to bring great numbers of casual visitors to the city. Many people do visit Greensboro on business, to attend small professional and fraternal conventions, for trade shows and for many other reasons. But it would be difficult to find a city which is less well prepared to greet visitors than Greensboro. There are no first-class hotels, and the several large motels are so scattered as to be unable to reinforce each other in accommodating sizeable groups. Good restaurants are almost non-existent, and those which can be found are much alike. Visitors find few adequately stocked gift shops, bookstores or record shops, and little after-dark entertainment is convenient to likely lodging and eating places. Greensboro is, in short, a city which a small convention or a moderate flow of business visitors may find tolerable, but which will not engender enthusiasm and a desire to return. Nor are residents likely to be much more excited about it.

The paucity of facilities of these kinds in a city as large as Greensboro constitutes a weakness in its economy and a drag on its economic development. Viewed in a more positive light, the underdeveloped amenities sector affords a signal opportunity for future growth. Expansion of facilities in central

Greensboro for serving both residents and transients combined with an attempt to draw larger numbers of the latter to the city might not only expand the number of jobs directly but also could provide collateral support to trade in general. The city's reputation as a growing, progressive, lively place with a good chance of becoming the regional leader would also be enhanced.

Professional and Technical Services

In a small city one rarely expects to find a broad and sophisticated range of professional and technical services. Large medical centers, concentrations of consulting firms and contract research installations, advertising and market research agencies, major computer facilities serving the public, architectural firms, advisory and trouble-shooting services for complex equipment, consulting engineers and engineering firms and many other kinds of specialized services emerge in and gravitate toward the larger cities. Greensboro has, in fact, more such operations than might perhaps be expected given its proximity to other cities of nearly the same size.

But, as with so many other things, the city has not yet established itself as the principal source of these services for the metropolitan region of which it is a part. The potential to do so exists, and its realization would have for Greensboro a two-fold significance. First, a stream of demand for services would be attracted to the city and would permit the supporting in it of many professional and technical personnel who are not now here. Second, the emergence of a large professional services sector together with the already large managerial and educational sectors, should attract technically advanced operations which otherwise would not locate here. As a source of jobs, few fields have

more to offer than high-level services. Though the number of positions might not be especially large in absolute terms, they would be high-productivity positions, and the future employment growth rate in sophisticated service occupations may almost certainly be expected to exceed that of employment in general.

In contemplating possibilities for expanding the high-productivity services sector of the Greensboro economy, the probable supply of trained persons to fill jobs created is of crucial importance. At present, Greensboro imports a large share of the persons who fill positions of this kind. Because this will continue to be true for the indefinite future, attention to certain factors affecting the willingness of professional and technical employees to locate and remain in Greensboro is vital. These individuals are much sought after, and they can choose the location which they prefer with some freedom. The beauty or ugliness of Greensboro, its higher education and cultural institutions, its cosmopolitanism or lack thereof, its communication media, its entertainment facilities, the quality of its primary and secondary schools, its race relations, the adequacy or ineptitude of its city planning, ease of movement within the city by automobile, ease of movement between Greensboro and other cities by plane and automobile, and a host of variables intangibly affect the "image" or "reputation" of Greensboro. This, in turn, has a strong bearing on its ability to attract and, especially, to retain the people needed to man a high-productivity services establishment.

Needless to say, also, it is desirable that Greensboro be able to educate locally an increasing percentage of the personnel needed to staff its

services sector. This suggests a need for dramatic expansion and diversification of the higher education complex. Greensboro begins in a relatively strong position in this regard but badly needs to promote fuller development of the institutions which fortune has placed here. This portion of the city's economic base has effects which extend in many directions, but nowhere is it more crucially important than in creating the professional and technical services sector of the future.

Management

A principal result of the growth of the services establishment can be to increase the ease and efficiency with which complicated business and governmental entities can be managed from Greensboro. Because of this, there is a close interdependence between the absolute size and growth rate of the high-productivity services segment of the metropolitan economy on one side and that of its managerial and executive sector on another. Encouragement of one is likely to stimulate the other, and a failure of one to develop is likely to constrain the expansion of the other.

Greensboro's advantages as a center for management are already considerable, as is evidenced by the concentration of executive functions in the city or near it. But problems of recruitment and retention of manpower also affect the management sector. As with professional and technical personnel, Greensboro must import many managers. This will probably always be true, but emphasis on local recruitment and training of managers should increase and should proceed with a keen awareness that modern

management training continues throughout most of the working life of the executive employee. Again, the attractiveness of the city as a general environment for the performance of management functions and the range and quality of the higher education institutions are two crucial variables. Once more, stimulation of the managerial sector is a two-sided process. Expansion of existing managerial operations and the attraction of new ones constitute one side; the other is the attraction to Greensboro and creation within Greensboro of a continuing flow of high-quality managers.

Government

Greensboro is not a center of state government; neither is it the site of large military installations or major civilian agencies of the federal government. Indirectly, the city benefits from government demand for the products of its principal industries. In Greensboro's case, this has in the past meant, mainly, more prosperous textile and apparel industries. In the near-term future, dependence on federal demand will increase, since the new Western Electric facility being built east of the city will apparently be committed mainly to defense work. Nonetheless, the direct and indirect dependence of the Greensboro economy on federal demand seems likely to remain moderate. On net balance, this is not altogether unfavorable, for dependence on defense contracts or other kinds of federal demand which are subject to severe variations can generate a degree of instability which is not welcome.

Of great long-range benefit to the city, however, would be the location in it of federal entities which are not directly related to defense or other

volatile kinds of federal demand. Greensboro is not an unfavorable location for such installations, but competition for them is intense, and economic considerations are not always decisive in determining the location of federal activities. The city's leaders and its representatives in Congress should bend every effort to secure additional federal installations, but the city cannot confidently expect more than a moderate expansion of the federal activities now found in it.

Much the same can be said of state government. State functions are likely to continue to be concentrated in Raleigh, with Greensboro receiving only a proportionate, or slightly more than proportionate, share of a few decentralized activities. The single major exception to this is found in higher education.

The city's two state universities, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, together enrolled in the fall of 1969 about 10,000 students. Their combined faculties exceeded 700, and they employed several times that number in non-teaching positions. Over recent years, construction at these two institutions has comprised between 10% and 15% of total building in Greensboro.⁴ Purchases of materials and supplies and buying by students and staff have added substantially to trade within the city. The universities can be expected to

⁴ The failure of the 1969 North Carolina General Assembly to appropriate any considerable sums for capital improvements at the Greensboro institutions will reduce this figure over the short-term future. Operating budgets continue to expand, however, and capital improvement needs must eventually be met.

grow, and it is likely that the Greensboro campus of the University of North Carolina will experience an unusually rapid increase in both enrollment and magnitude of expenditures, for it is changing radically the range of functions which it performs. Growth of the universities will mean an increase in the number of technical and professional jobs in the city and a rise in demand for goods and services of almost all kinds.

Basic support for the universities will continue to come from the state government, but not to be overlooked is the probability that federal contributions will increase greatly in future years. This increase should result not only from expanded support of research and related activities as the quality and size of the educational complex mount, but also from the future assumption by the federal government of an increasing share of the basic cost of higher education. The direct impact of the universities on the Greensboro economy is already large. It promises to grow as time passes, for the rate at which these institutions expand their expenditures is almost certain to be greater than the rate of expansion of the Greensboro economy in general.

THE GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE LABOR FORCE

Considering the prosperity of Greensboro and the seemingly rapid expansion of employment opportunities, it is surprising that the labor force appears to have increased at an unsatisfactory rate in recent years. This moderate labor force growth becomes even more surprising when the low unemployment figures and high labor force participation rates of recent times are considered. To the casual listener and reader of help-wanted ads, the

most obvious economic weak spot in Greensboro over the past several years has been a continual scarcity of labor, both skilled and unskilled. Neither a rapid upsurge in the city's population nor a burgeoning of its labor force would in itself necessarily be a good thing. But a continual shortage of labor serious enough to inhibit the expansion of Greensboro enterprises or to deter new enterprises from locating in the city is a matter which poses questions for the future.⁵

This study cannot undertake a detailed examination of reasons why more people do not come to Greensboro in search of work or of why Greensboro employers do not seek them out with greater success. A careful analysis of these matters should be made, for if the national economy continues to operate near full employment levels, the size of the stream of entrants to the labor force will greatly affect Greensboro's attractiveness as a location for new and expanded enterprises. Furthermore, if Greensboro is actually to emerge as metropolis to the urban region in which it is situated, an acceleration in the rate of growth of its population and labor force must occur. Leadership requires that the city

⁵ The seeming slowness of Greensboro's population growth since 1960 is puzzling, particularly since almost all indicators show evidence of a comparatively rapid rate of general economic expansion. It is possible that provisional population estimates are in error, as they are based mainly on a special census taken in 1966 to determine compliance with voting rights legislation. This census may have been too carelessly and hastily taken. There is a tendency on the part of observers of the Greensboro economy to look forward to the census of 1970 with the hope that it may prove the provisional estimates to have been wrong. In the meantime, however, it would be unwise to ignore the evidence of slow growth in head count which comes from those data which are available.

move obviously and substantially ahead of nearby competitors so that it immediately comes to mind as the "best" location in north-central North Carolina. Failure of population and labor force to expand at rapid rates seems to be, at one and the same time, a factor inhibiting its emergence as metropolis and further evidence that it does not yet hold this position.

DOWNTOWN GREENSBORO AND THE FUTURE

DOWNTOWN GREENSBORO AND THE FUTURE

In Chapter III the wretched obsolescence of downtown Greensboro was cited as an obstacle in the way of development. This problem and prospects for its solution warrant a separate treatment with particular emphasis on the role of central Greensboro in years still to come.

Curiously enough, it is possible to argue that downtown difficulties merit little attention. To hold this view requires that one think in terms of limited, highly specialized downtown functions, ignore unpleasant but relatively harmless ugliness, and see in Greensboro's future continued partnership in a group of medium-sized cities all much alike and, with their environs, comprising an urban complex without a hub. This amounts to simple transposition of the present situation into the future with an allowance for quantitative expansion but none for a qualitative change in the internal structure of the complex. Yet it is a basic argument of this study that the lack of a true central city in an urban agglomeration as large as that near Greensboro creates a leadership vacuum which is likely eventually to be filled through the emergence of a metropolis. Clearly, however, an aspirant to the role of regional metropolis must first generate a concentrated urban structure in its own immediate neighborhood. Greensboro has so far not done this; in some ways it is, even within its own limits, more like a cluster of small towns than a single city, and the weakness of downtown is in large measure responsible.

Greensboro's central business district, as it exists today, performs few indispensable functions. It would not--in the short run--be greatly missed by the city's economy if it were replaced by a park, and the aesthetic appeal of Greensboro would benefit from the switch. Looking toward the future, and particularly if one poses the question of how to maximize the extent to which Greensboro can realize its potential, the downtown problem is as critical as any the city faces.

Greensboro's leaders have long been aware that a renaissance of downtown is badly needed, and planning for this is relatively far advanced. Proposals looking toward massive redevelopment of the center city have been prepared; the federal government has agreed to redevelopment in principle and has provided funds for more detailed planning. Some portions of the overall project are underway or likely to be soon. But downtown redevelopment has repeatedly been delayed, and actual progress on it is, to date, slight. Moreover, no amount of redevelopment alone will provide an optimal solution to the riddle of the role of downtown in Greensboro's future. To see the reasons for the present low estate of the central business district as well as the long-range significance of the downtown problem, we must first take a brief look at the history of Greensboro.

Downtown Greensboro to 1930

Between 1910 and 1930, as the population figures in Table V:1 show, Greensboro grew from a large town to a small city.¹ Nearby High Point

¹A major extension of the incorporated area of Greensboro in 1923 affects the comparability of 1920 and 1930 figures, but on the whole, the rapid growth was real, as county figures show.

TABLE V:1

Population, Greensboro, High Point, and Guilford County
1900-1960

<u>Place</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1920</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
Greensboro	10,035	15,895	19,861	53,569	59,319	74,389	119,574
High Point	4,163	9,525	14,302	36,745	39,495	39,973	62,063
Guilford County	39,074	60,497	79,272	133,010	153,916	191,057	246,520

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

also emerged as a sizeable place, and Guilford County, containing them both, gained population at an unusual rate. Over these decades, Greensboro expanded and diversified its commercial, manufacturing and financial sectors dramatically. The reality of rapid growth combined with the optimism of the era to generate expectations of phenomenal future development. As a result, Greensboro built between about 1918 and 1929 a downtown out of keeping with the actual size of the city. A central business district for a regional center of perhaps 75,000 emerged at a time when Greensboro had from about a quarter to something more than half that many people. Retail and wholesale trade were unusually stimulated by the outcreep of the first good roads linking Greensboro to surrounding and even then populous areas. The town's already substantial insurance industry was thriving. Good rail connections attracted travelers. The several Greensboro banks were growing and highly growth-minded. And the textile mills were busy and expanding. Within the city, suburbanization had not yet proceeded very far, and the automobile was not the force it was later to become in structuring urban growth. Downtown Greensboro was the "community shopping center" for most of the city's population, and it still contained a concentration of enterprises catering to basic food, clothing, and household needs.

Actual prosperity and great expectations joined to produce an extraordinary building boom in the 1920's. Its dimensions were spectacular enough, and its collapse was complete enough, to affect downtown Greensboro strongly for many years to come. Building permits are not a perfect measure of the extent of construction activity, but they are indicative. Table V:2 and

TABLE V:2

Value of Building Permits Issued by the City of Greensboro, in Current Dollars and in Dollars of 1967
Purchasing Power, 1919 - 1968

(permits in millions)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Value of Permits Issued</u>	<u>Construction Cost Index^a</u>	<u>Value of Permits in 1967 Dollars</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Value of Permits Issued</u>	<u>Construction Cost Index^a</u>	<u>Value of Permits in 1967 Dollars</u>
1919	\$ 1.0	30	\$ 3.3	1944	\$ 0.3	37	\$ 0.7
1920	1.2	37	3.3	1945	3.5	38	9.1
1921	1.9	30	6.5	1946	3.6	45	8.1
1922	4.2	27	15.6	1947	8.6	54	16.0
1923	3.5	30	11.7	1948	10.3	60	17.2
1924	4.3	30	14.5	1949	10.9	59	18.5
1925	6.2	30	20.6	1950	17.5	62	28.2
1926	6.4	30	21.2	1951	14.8	67	22.0
1927	4.8	30	16.1	1952	8.2	69	11.8
1928	5.0	30	16.8	1953	9.8	70	14.0
1929	3.1	30	10.4	1954	10.9	70	15.6
1930	0.8	29	2.6	1955	11.2	72	15.5
1931	1.1	26	4.3	1956	14.0	76	18.4
1932	0.2	23	0.9	1957	13.1	79	16.6
1933	0.3	25	1.1	1958	26.9	80	33.6
1934	0.6	28	2.2	1959	30.0	82	36.5
1935	1.1	27	4.0	1960	28.2	82	34.4
1936	1.8	28	6.6	1961	30.0	83	36.2
1937	2.1	30	7.1	1962	31.1	86	36.2
1938	1.9	30	6.2	1963	28.1	87	32.3
1939	2.1	28	7.4	1964	44.4	90	49.4
1940	2.7	29	9.2	1965	39.5	92	42.9
1941	1.9	31	6.1	1966	47.1	95	49.5
1942	0.6	35	1.8	1967	43.6	100	43.6
1943	0.1	38	0.3	1968	52.1	105	49.6

^aDepartment of Commerce Composite Construction Cost Index, base shifted to 1967=100.

Sources: City of Greensboro and U.S. Department of Commerce.

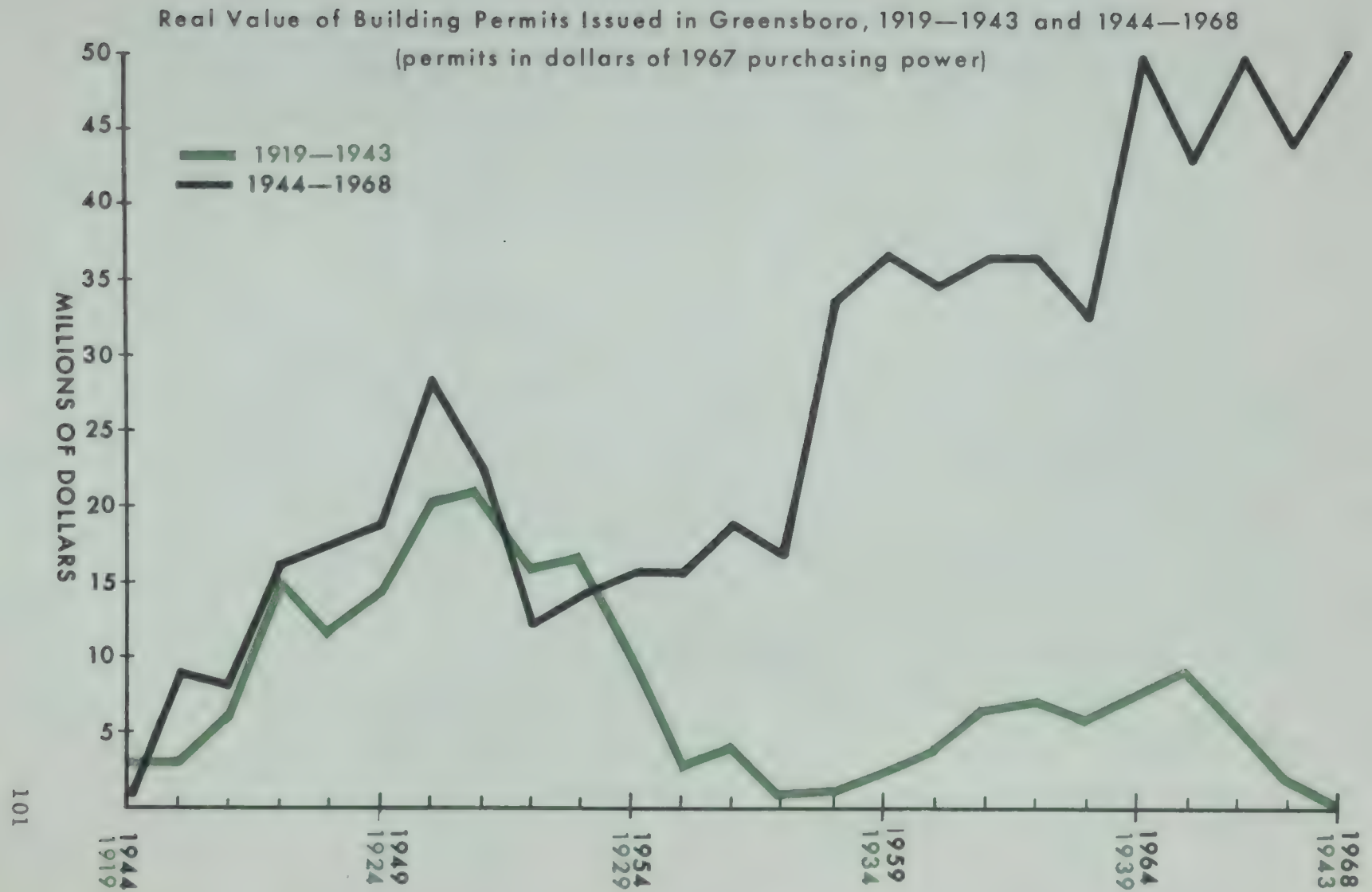
Figure V:1 present some interesting permit data. Shown are the values of permits issued in Greensboro for a 50-year period, 1919-1968. The permit data have been adjusted for price changes, and are stated in terms of dollars of 1967 purchasing power as well as in actual dollars. City limit changes (most importantly, in 1923 and 1957) affect the comparability of the data, but the outlines of what occurred are clear. Measured in dollars of constant purchasing power, the pace of building reached a near frenzy in the 1920's, collapsed in 1930, and did not consistently regain the levels of the 1920's until after the large city limit expansion of 1957.²

While the building boom of the 1920's extended to residential as well as commercial construction, the extent to which it was concentrated on downtown Greensboro was unusual and highly significant for the future. During the twenties this small city constructed in its central business district a seventeen-story home office for an insurance company, a thirteen-story hotel to accompany another major hotel completed in 1919, a thirteen-story building to house a bank, a railroad station whose 1968 cost would have been \$4 to \$5 million, two large movie and vaudeville theaters, and dozens of lesser structures.³ Though the pace of building slackened after 1926, it remained high, and optimism persisted through 1929 despite the national stock market crash and the beginnings of serious trouble in Greensboro's never-very-strong

²In 1967 dollars and for a comparable geographic area, building permits in Greensboro did not regain the level of the 1920's until at least the middle 1960's, if then.

³Perhaps because of the highly speculative nature of much downtown building in the 1920's it was too often of cheap construction and surpassing ugliness. The false front and shabby backside ruled the day in design, and some structures were fit, after a decade or two, only for demolition.

Figure V:1



source: Table V:2

commercial banking system. In a commentary on prospects for construction a story in the Greensboro Daily News of December 29, 1929 held that:

Public utility companies and municipal departments will spend \$2,425,000 in Greensboro during the coming year . . . while it is expected that the construction of new homes and stores will exceed the total of 1929 and will probably approach the 1928 total of \$5,048,295 (the figures are in dollars of 1928 and 1929 purchasing power).

The same article anticipated a capital expenditure of approximately \$2 million by Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company during 1930 and "two huge hotel projects, one involving an expenditure of \$750,000 and the other the sum of \$682,000." Building permits of all kinds actually issued during 1930 came to but \$766,985. A last large undertaking downtown was a new post office which was constructed in 1931 and was, in part, an anti-depression measure of the federal government. The building explosion was over, but its effects endured for a long time.

The Depression to the Sixties

Greensboro continued to gain population through the 1930's and the early '40's, but downtown facilities were more than sufficient to serve added needs. An acceleration of growth came during World War II and continued into the post-war period. By this time, however, the lines of development followed a pattern much different from that of the 1920's. Greensboro sprawled over an ever-increasing expanse of land and the chief mode of transportation was the private automobile. As in so many other cities, the residential areas ringing the old center of town deteriorated

steadily. Because Greensboro found it easy to annex large amounts of territory, population growth and the efflux of people from older districts seldom resulted in permanent residence outside its corporate limits. But, gradually, most of the population did come to live outside the immediate sphere of influence of the central shopping district. Routine purchases could be made in the multiplying suburban shopping centers and, because it had developed when Greensboro was a small city, downtown had little to offer which could not be bought more conveniently elsewhere. Beyond this, circumstances combined in Greensboro to create a paucity of logical tenants for downtown office space and this contributed heavily to the failure of the center city to recover its vitality of pre-depression days.

High on the list of these circumstances was the collapse of commercial banking during the early '30's. Banks in Greensboro had never been unusually large, and the banking crisis which accompanied the depression closed all of them by 1933. For a period of about five months the city had no normally operating commercial bank, and when successor institutions did appear, they were small and remained so by comparison with the principal North Carolina banks. After World War II, Greensboro banks were prosperous, but they were soon caught up in the wave of mergers which swept North Carolina, and each eventually lost its separate identity.

In their home towns, banks are major occupants and developers of downtown office space, and their presence there tends to stimulate allied demands for offices. North Carolina's liberal branch-banking laws encourage wide dispersion of small banking offices on the one hand and

concentration of major installations in a few headquarter cities on the other. The banks re-established in Greensboro after the depression could be more than adequately served with central office space built in the 1920's. When they merged with other institutions, the immediate prospect for major new bank construction vanished. Greensboro in recent times has enjoyed excellent banking service, but this has been provided by institutions whose principal offices are not in the city. Not until the mid-1960's was demand for space sufficient to make banks good prospects as tenants or developers of large new downtown facilities.

In most cities, the hotel business is also a principal user of downtown space and the visitors it houses afford important support to centrally located restaurants, retail stores and service enterprises. Apart from a brief period during and immediately following World War II, this has not been the case in Greensboro since the 1920's. The decline of travel by rail, relocation of major highways to the periphery of the city, a boom in the motel industry along principal auto routes, the lack of any particular reason for most travelers to stay downtown and a generous measure of managerial neglect combined by the mid-1960's to bring the closing of one of Greensboro's two large downtown hotels and the serious deterioration of the other. No new hotel has been built in the central business district since the 1920's, though 1966 saw the completion of a high-rise motor hotel a short distance west of the center of town.

Greensboro's manufacturing corporations likewise have not been heavy demanders of downtown office space. Several of these are large and have much executive employment in the city, but a downtown location has not generally been important to them. The principal textile enterprises, like most others located in the Southeast, divide their executive staffs between Greensboro and another city, usually New York. This reduces demand for local office space, and that which is needed has often been provided in combination with manufacturing installations located outside of downtown. The insurance industry, one of Greensboro's most important, is split between downtown and the far-out suburbs. Two of three principal companies are located in the center, but they occupy structures built decades ago which still have not been outgrown to the point that new buildings have been necessary. The third insurance company long ago located its executive offices in a park-like complex far from the center and has apparently operated without difficulty from this exurban site.

Retail trade has, as already noted, scattered new facilities widely over Greensboro. Without a large influx of customers from outlying areas and other cities, and without a heavy concentration of office workers downtown, there has been no compelling incentive for established merchants to undertake extensive expansion or improvement of downtown stores. Nor has there been any particular reason for new retailing ventures to locate there. No active effort was made until very recent times to lure customers to downtown stores. These stores are closed most evenings, and little energy or money has been expended on the development of new speciality

stores or unusual lines of merchandise which might distinguish the downtown shopping area from any of several outlying centers. Not even the boom of the 1920's brought a large downtown department store to Greensboro, and subsequent decades have not changed this situation.

Much of what has been said of retail trade can also be said of wholesale trade. A great deal of wholesaling was originally located in or near downtown, especially near rail transportation. Considerable wholesaling and some warehousing facilities are still found near the center, but these are typically older firms. New establishments have gravitated to outlying locations, most notably to those having immediate access to the interstate highways.

Other factors in the lethargy of downtown may be mentioned briefly. Greensboro's most important single entertainment facility, an auditorium-coliseum complex, was placed, probably unwisely, far from downtown. Ownership of land in the central business district is spread among many hands, sometimes including numerous heirs to small shares of old Greensboro residential properties. Assemblage of large enough amounts of land for important downtown undertakings is difficult. A curious small-town psychology with respect to handling automobiles has also pervaded the city. "Adequate parking space" has been construed to mean on-street parking supplemented by numerous open lots. The concept of multi-level garages was slow to come to Greensboro, even though the expanse of asphalt in parking lots downtown grew to giant proportions and represented a gross waste of space which might have been more productively (or, at least,

more attractively) used for other purposes.⁴

These and additional adverse influences produced a downtown Greensboro which was, in the early 1960's, substantially the same as it had been in the late 1920's except that it had aged and decayed in the intervening years. Looking at the center city circa 1963, a casual observer would have guessed that the town was perhaps half its true size, and he would have been inclined to regard it as poor and depressed instead of one of the richest of medium-sized Southeastern centers. Stripped of many of its old functions and not yet able to play a distinctive new role, the center city was moribund as a vital participant in the ecology of Greensboro.⁵

The Beginnings of Revival

By the mid-1960's, civic concern over central Greensboro and a gradual mutation of the objective forces shaping its development seem to have joined to produce improved prospects for downtown. The list of major projects begun or definitely planned is impressive. They include the first high-rise office structure to be built since the 1920's (begun in 1964); a multi-million dollar postal facility near downtown (also begun in 1964);

⁴ This peculiarity led to Greensboro's photograph appearing in a famous treatise on cities as a portion of page captioned "Urban Devastation." See Lewis Mumford, The City in History (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961, Graphic Section III, Plate 47).

⁵ Other North Carolina cities also suffered in varying degrees from the boom-and-bust pattern of downtown development which we have described for Greensboro. Among the principal places, Asheville, Durham and Winston-Salem seem to have had experiences roughly like Greensboro's. In Charlotte and Raleigh the cycle was less pronounced.

renovation of a federal building at a cost of about \$900,000 (completed in 1968); a high-rise motor hotel just outside the central business district (begun in 1965); a new office building for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Greensboro (begun in 1968); a high-rise office building with a commercial bank as principal tenant (announced in 1968); the city's first two multi-level municipal parking garages (one completed in 1967 and another announced in 1969); and, most important, the beginning of work in 1969 on a city-county governmental center involving redevelopment of several blocks at a cost of about \$15 million. Realignment or reconstruction of thoroughfares linking downtown to the rest of the city is in progress or advanced planning, and great improvements in traffic flow have already been accomplished.

What has happened so far does not amount to the rebirth of downtown Greensboro. It is, however, the most promising start which the city has seen in over forty years. Furthermore, there are reasons to believe the time is ripe for resurgence of the center city.⁶

Just as it is rare for a metropolitan region the size of that in north-central North Carolina to be without a metropolis, it is also

⁶The attraction of downtown is still limited. In 1968, Greensboro's largest manufacturing corporation announced plans for a new executive office building, but the new building will go some three miles west of the present center of the city. Mistakes are also still being made. The city's first publicly-sponsored apartment building for the elderly, a high-rise structure, is being located near a congested shopping center but well away from downtown. A second, approved in late 1969, will be located in the center city.

unusual for a city the size of Greensboro to be without a focal center. And the larger the city grows, the less sensible and less economic it becomes to scatter facilities at random over its broad geographic expanse. Except for a resurgent downtown, no single shopping center can support a broad range of speciality stores, nor can any other shopping center support large full-line department stores. Outlying hotels, motels or restaurants convenient to one quadrant of the city are inconvenient to the others, and the lack of centrally located facilities comes to be a greater and greater nuisance. Some people still use public transportation, and the only shopping area which can effectively be served from all over the city by bus is downtown. Some offices serve a clientele spread widely enough (or sufficiently concentrated in the center city) to make downtown the only feasible location for them. The flight to the suburbs does not involve the entire population, and as these suburbs spread farther and farther, commuting becomes increasingly expensive and time-consuming.

Furthermore, renewal has eliminated much of the worst of the decayed residential area ringing downtown Greensboro, and redevelopment is still in progress. For occupants of the new housing resulting from this, downtown is the most convenient major shopping area. These people provide a comparatively small but growing base for the simpler retail activities. This base is augmented by the presence near the downtown area of approximately 10,000 residential college students. North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is roughly a mile east of downtown. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is about the same distance west

of downtown, Greensboro College is between the latter and the center, and Bennett College lies not far to the southeast. For these college students, downtown is the most accessible and the most inviting shopping area.

As suburbs sprawl ever more widely, and if, as seems likely, the average family size continues slowly to diminish, demand for apartments will continue to grow throughout the nation. Traditionally, apartment developments were rare in Greensboro, but they have multiplied in the past few years. Most of those already constructed are found in suburban areas. But the suburbs are not necessarily the most convenient or pleasant locations for all apartment dwellers, and the stage seems to be set for substantial apartment developments nearer the central portion of the city. Such apartments, if undertaken with taste and imagination, could attract a large and comparatively high-income clientele for downtown composed mostly of single persons, couples without children, and those whose children are grown. The elderly also constitute a growing segment of the population, and location near the varied facilities and public transportation of the center city is logical for them.

In speculating about the downtown of a future Greensboro, it probably would be an error to think only in terms of the classic forms and functions of central business districts built in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. A constituency like that of earlier years, which regards downtown as its primary source of basic requirements will continue to exist, probably even to grow. But for the vast majority of citizens, and certainly for visitors attracted from the surrounding urban complex,

central Greensboro will not supply such basics such as food, simple clothing, and common housewares. These are conveniently obtained at outlying stores or in smaller towns, and it would be fatuous to suppose that people in any considerable numbers will drive for miles to obtain things which they can buy economically near home.

If its trade is to increase rapidly, downtown Greensboro must emerge as a purveyor of unusual merchandise and sophisticated services and as a site for stores of a size which could not be supported in any other shopping center. The only real advantage of central location, except to those retail establishments which cater to a nearby clientele, is the fact that it is more readily accessible to a great number of people than is any single suburban center. At one end of the spectrum of shopping facilities, this makes downtown the most logical location for sellers of specialty merchandise bought only occasionally by any single customer but purchased in sizeable total amounts by the combined population. At the other end of the spectrum, downtown is also the logical location for such things as large, full-range department stores and large discount-type stores, provided that the problems of moving traffic and providing adequate parking are satisfactorily solved. All three of these kinds of facilities compete with each other in a sense, but they are also complementary. The greater the variety of downtown shopping, the greater the incentive to go there, and only downtown (in a city of Greensboro's size) can wide variety be supported.

Renewed expansion of downtown retail functions is favored by several forces which have been at work in Greensboro and other cities. One of these is rising income per person. As incomes mount, a smaller and smaller percentage of the total family expenditure is absorbed by the basics, food, clothing, and shelter. Even in these three categories, tastes are upgraded. Simple luxuries are readily available in the neighborhood shopping centers, but it is difficult for most shopping centers to go beyond this. All but the largest suburban centers (and Greensboro has none which are unusually large) have a sameness about them; they contain similar groups of stores carrying limited inventories of standard kinds of merchandise the country over. The higher incomes go, the less satisfactory the neighborhood center becomes.

Large department stores, giant discount facilities and varied speciality shops can only survive where thousands of people can be attracted. In a small city, even the downtown cannot support them. The kind of department store which can prosper in the center of a city of, say, less than 150,000 is ordinarily not much different from stores in a medium-sized suburban shopping center. Small cities do not generate the volume of traffic needed for a distinctive downtown, unless they happen to be surrounded by heavily populated areas with no other city nearby. Greensboro itself may not yet be large enough to support a highly developed set of central facilities, but Greensboro and its surrounding urban complex assuredly are. If Greensboro emerges as central city to the complex, the metropolitan market will be more than adequate to support a flourishing and diversified retail core.

Much of what has been said about merchandise outlets can also be said about hotels, restaurants, theaters, clubs and other service enterprises. Location of these establishments downtown was logical in the days before suburbanization and reliance upon auto transport had gone far, and they tended to cluster there even in small cities. In large cities, this continues to be true, for even with a great decline in the relative share of business enjoyed by downtown installations, enough still exists to support considerable clustering. Smaller places, including Greensboro, have seen downtown services languish. But location of hotels (usually motels) and restaurants, in particular, in outlying areas has disadvantages as well as advantages. Each one, or small group, of them tends then to serve a tiny segment of the total city market, and living or dining accommodations scattered over remote areas of the city become much like each other, with few attracting really large numbers of people.

Those theaters, clubs, hotels and restaurants located in most downtowns today tend to depend heavily on transients without automobiles (centrally located "motor hotels" are partial exceptions). Persons who work or reside near downtown, shoppers and a sprinkling of others comprise the remainder of their business. In a large city this permits survival of downtown facilities, though for several decades their growth has tended to lag relative to outlying installations. Cities which were small, as Greensboro was, in the heyday of downtown services saw a rapid but incipient growth prematurely attenuated by suburbanization and the automobile. In some cases, as is true of Greensboro, downtown services of

some types practically disappeared, and others were reduced in quality and variety. This created a void which becomes more and more troublesome as the size of such cities increases. Scattered outlying facilities leave an ever larger number of persons inconvenienced, and the state is progressively set for re-emergence of modern and attractive downtown service establishments. A similar sequence of events has characterized office location. Except for governmental offices, which are a special case, few of the types of offices likely to be centrally located deal directly with large numbers of the public. In general, downtown location is the result of tradition; the need to deal with a select clientele found there; the need to be near other offices in the central business district; or the need to be easily accessible to a large and varied work force coming from different parts of the city. Of these reasons, tradition is not likely to be compelling over the long-run, though it has resulted in extensive core development in some cities, particularly during times of exceptional prosperity and growth.

The more enduring reasons for a central office site are those having to do with economic advantage. Two of these, access to a particular clientele and proximity to other offices, are closely related to the absolute size of the city and also to the past, present and prospective development of its central business district. They express the results of interdependencies among downtown activities, and the magnitudes of these interdependencies vary with the extent of present concentration and the trends followed by downtown growth. It is nearly true that the whole complex of downtown functions must develop together or none of them can grow at any great rate. The final consideration, accessibility to a large and varied work force, was much more significant prior to the shift to commuting by car than it is today, though it retains some force and may grow again in importance over the years ahead.

Greensboro's moderate size and the particular time pattern followed by its expansion have both been unfavorable to the generation and retention of offices downtown. When the flowering of its central business district was halted by the depression of the 1930's Greensboro was still small. But downtown interests had already built in anticipation of a speedy future growth of interdependent office facilities which did not, in fact, materialize. When general growth accelerated again during and after World War II, the downtown office complex was not sufficiently large to have any great attraction for new activities, and its recent history of stagnation dulled incentives further. The sprawl of the city combined with easy movement by automobile to produce a dispersion of offices which would not have occurred in the smaller Greensboro of the past nor, probably, in the larger Greensboro of the future.

Nearly the same is true with the matter of accessibility of office to work force. Though the downtown area is more accessible to more people than any other location in the city, the ease of commuting by car has encouraged building on outlying sites. Furthermore, in Greensboro, a large percentage of managerial personnel (particularly those who are in a position to decide the location of new offices) lives in a small number of geographically distinct residential areas rather than being spread in all directions. Other workers have proved to be quite mobile. Thus, much of the advantage which downtown has from the standpoint of ease of access by employees has been neutralized.

Again, it is probable that the relative advantage of downtown is changing with the passage of time. As the city grows and diversifies, interdependencies favoring a central location seem also to be growing.

Geographic sprawl makes outlying sites less and less favorable to easy movement from one office to another when there is a frequent need for such movement. The spreading of the city likewise restores some of the advantages of downtown to commuting employees. Just how far development must proceed before the forces favoring a central location for offices come strongly to outweigh those which have produced dispersion is impossible to say. But it seems likely that centripetal forces are gaining strength at a rate faster than that of the city's over-all growth.

The term "interdependency" has been used several times, and the importance of interdependencies among the several economic sectors which support the bulk of downtown activity can hardly be stressed too heavily. The growth of each depends upon the growth of all, and it is not probable that any single dramatic breakthrough will restore the health of Greensboro's downtown unless a spreading wave of change follows. Though it alone is not enough, comprehensive, government-sponsored redevelopment of the kind which has so long been planned in Greensboro probably stands the best chance of triggering such a wave.

Easy to overlook, but nonetheless crucial, is the high probability that heavy private investment in downtown Greensboro depends far more on what is expected to happen in the intermediate-term future than it depends upon the present condition of the central business district. Once it is felt with conviction that a renaissance of downtown is ahead, that renaissance is likely to follow almost as matter of course. Events have carried Greensboro to a point where a dramatic re-evaluation of the

prospects of its central business district as a location for expanded and improved private activities of many types seems overdue.

One further point needs to be made. The objective forces and changes in outlook which seem to be creating the basis for a revitalization of Greensboro's downtown will not necessarily focus on the area which was downtown when this was built before 1930. Greensboro's geographic expansion has not proceeded evenly in all directions, and the downtown built over forty years ago is not now so centrally located as it was then. The city has moved farther to the west, southwest, and northwest than it has in the other directions. Consequently, the present downtown may come ultimately to be the southeastern fringe of a new central business district. This could be changed by an acceleration of the spread of Greensboro to the east, northeast, and southeast, but there are few signs as yet that such an alteration in growth pattern is underway. Much of the present downtown may eventually be best devoted to other uses, with commercial expansion engulfing residential areas immediately west and northwest of the present central business district. Portions of these are badly deteriorated and in need of reconstruction in any case. The future downtown will doubtless be larger than the old, and a predominantly east-west orientation may replace the present north-south axis. Already foreseeable development could cause the central business district to stretch from about Elm Street (the present north-south "main street") west and northwest toward the Friendly Shopping Center (some three miles from the present center of town). Such a movement would neither be inherently good nor inherently bad, and pressure for movement should probably be accommodated rather than restrained.

VI

FALSE STARTS, NEAR MISSES, STEPPING STONES AND
AN AGENDA FOR LEADERSHIP

VI

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Certain impressions of an editorial nature have emerged from the data which underlie the earlier chapters of this study and from observation of the broad outlines of Greensboro's past and present. Related to these impressions are some notions of mine regarding the things which need doing if the city is to move toward fuller realization of its potential. This chapter is an accumulation of observations and recommendations. Though it is not an entirely random and arbitrary collection, neither does it form a cohesive and symmetrical whole. Much that is here may excite debate (or argument); if so, the more the better.

According to the census of 1900, the port town of Wilmington was North Carolina's largest. By 1910, the lead had passed to Charlotte. Winston-Salem held first place in 1920, but had lost it again by 1930. As late as the census of 1940, the resort city of Asheville counted more people than the state capital, Raleigh. Durham multiplied its population approximately eight-fold between 1900 and 1930 but in the succeeding thirty years experienced only about a 50% increase. Greensboro was smaller than Asheville, Charlotte, Raleigh, Wilmington, or Winston-Salem in 1900 but placed second only to Charlotte in 1960. Margins of size difference among these cities were small until the last decade or two, and much of the shifting of position is traceable to changes in city limits, but it is nonetheless true that most of North Carolina's cities have grown by fits and starts. In the past few decades, the exceptions to this generalization

have been Charlotte, Raleigh, and to a considerable degree, Greensboro.

Erratic urban growth seems to be explained mostly by the early dependence of many North Carolina towns on a very narrow economic base. Wilmington's early prominence could be traced primarily to ocean shipping, but its natural advantages as a seaport were limited, and it never became the terminus of a first-rate land transportation system. The railroads and highways, when they came to dominate transport to the back country, led more conveniently to other ports. Asheville flourished on the early tourist trade and a limited amount of industry. Durham and Winston-Salem burgeoned with tobacco manufacturing and the southward movement of textiles, but these were not sufficient to support steady growth over a long period. Even more dramatic examples of start-stop development can be found among smaller towns where often the expansion or stagnation of a single enterprise explains the pattern of development. Two of the consistent performers, Charlotte and Raleigh, have been so mostly because their economic foundations are broader and because the chief components of their economic base were of the sort prone to steady long-term growth.

Greensboro must be considered an intermediate case. The economic foundation here is more diversified than those of, say, the Durham or Winston-Salem of the past, but less so than Charlotte's. The Greensboro growth pattern has been more consistent than those of the former two cities, but less so than that of the latter.

Except for Raleigh, which has been much affected by expansion of the size and functions of state government, the experience of North Carolina's cities

and towns suggests that a critical relative size and extent of diversification must be attained before reasonably stable growth can be expected. So long as a city has had no great size advantage over its neighbors and was dependent upon one or more leading activities to propel its economy, the rate of development seems eventually to have become asymptotic to a quite moderate upward trend. The original growth sectors carry the city forward rapidly for a time, but their rate of expansion tends to decline and, unless new leading sectors take their places, the city undergoes a period of semi-stagnation.

Charlotte may have passed the critical points with respect to relative size and extent of diversification. Raleigh's leading sector, the state government, is uniquely open-ended as to magnitude and time span of growth, and the city seems rapidly to be adding other sources of strength. Greensboro is again a mixed case. Its size relative to that of neighboring places is not sufficient to assure the continuing momentum which would go with regional leadership. It has growth sectors within its industrial structure and in non-manufacturing activities, but these have at times been hard-pressed to offset the drag of its long-established and slow-growing textile manufacturing foundation.

The additional push which could have put Greensboro past the critical thresholds in size and diversity of economic structure might have come from a number of sources through the city's history. Greensboro has had breaks in economic life, but it has also suffered some "near misses." According to one account, for example, there was a chance in the 1880's and 1890's that Greensboro would become the "little Pittsburgh of the South," with a flourishing basic iron and steel industry. Substantial investments actually were made, but ore

deposits proved unsuitable within the context of the technology of that day. Doubtless prospects for a basic iron and steel industry were never really bright. But it is probably true that the addition of any one additional growth industry to the vigorous textile expansion of the late 19th and early 20th centuries would have attracted enough others to make the city a regional leader.

To take another example, Greensboro in the early 1920's was a leading contender to become the site of a branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. The branch ultimately went to Charlotte, but, had it located in Greensboro, this city rather than Charlotte would almost certainly have become the principal banking center of the Carolinas. Subsequent disappearance of the Greensboro banks through failure and merger would have been rendered less likely and the attraction of the banking nucleus to other activities would have been great.

Further yet, the 1920's saw a sharp fall in the potential of Greensboro's insurance industry, which has been one of its mainstays throughout modern times. The city lost a sizeable life insurance enterprise to Winston-Salem and saw a promising group of fire and casualty insurance companies merge into enterprises in other states. Though it retained a considerable measure of leadership in insurance, Greensboro's eminence in this field was "almost" much greater. Still more recently, Greensboro in the 1960's was under serious consideration as a location for two major breweries whose combined investment would have approached \$100 million.

Both, apparently for no absolutely compelling reason, failed to locate in the city.¹

Certainly Greensboro is not alone in having lost economic opportunities. The city has had its share of successes, and it would be fatuous to argue that it, more than other cities in the Carolinas, has been adversely affected by what nearly happened but didn't. This is not the point. The significance of missed opportunities is simply that the city has come close to gaining the added impetus needed to establish regional leadership on several occasions. A few more favorable accidents in its past could have nudged it into a growth path which would itself then have become the engine for further acceleration of development and emergence as metropolis to a region which has long had the capacity to support one.

Another deterrent to more rapid and broader-based growth in Greensboro also merits attention. Though no one has actually counted, and comparisons must therefore be quite speculative, it seems that Greensboro has been the birthplace of an unusual number of successful enterprises which then were lost through merger or relocation. The cases of the banks and of certain insurance institutions have already been cited. But additional examples are easy to find among large retail and wholesale establishments, service industries and manufacturing firms. In textiles, apparel, and insurance, the city has fared relatively well in retaining ownership and management of firms born

¹ Loss of the breweries may prove a long-range blessing in view of their heavy demands on water supply and waste disposal facilities and Greensboro's comparatively disadvantageous position with regard to both of these. The short-run stimulus would, however, have been great.

here as well as in acquiring enterprises which originated elsewhere. But even in these fields merger and relocation have had some adverse effect on over-all growth. Nor is the merger and relocation period necessarily over. With very few exceptions, the still considerable number of sizeable Greensboro-based enterprises are likely candidates for merger.

Again, there may be a kind of critical point in the growth of a city and its principal enterprises which must be passed before the net balance of mergers and consolidations come reliably to be in its favor rather a constant threat to its most vital sources of leadership and wealth.

A small city in which conditions favor the genesis of successful enterprises which grow rapidly and profitably to medium size must probably expect to lose a considerable share of them. This does not rob the city of all benefits from such enterprises, for they often continue to operate as branches or semi-autonomous subsidiaries of large firms and thus continue to provide much employment at levels up to and including middle management. But control passes out of local hands, and the enterprises lose most of their identification with the city and some of their reasons for concern with its future. In such cases, the original owners, in effect, have used the city as a stepping stone to wealth, and the new management has no reason to see it as more than a convenience.²

² This is not intended as a criticism; there is nothing "evil" about mergers. In some cases, they are highly beneficial and add good management and expanded potential to an otherwise nondescript enterprise. But merger or relocation of a successful and progressive local firm is a loss to a city.

Branch operations are not to be disdained; they are valuable to any city, but they are not in most cases equivalent substitutes for local enterprises which have been successful on their own.

Another problem besetting the small or middle-sized city which has seen the birth and growth of successful independent businesses is the tendency of those who profit from these enterprises to look beyond the small city for realization of their social, cultural, economic and philanthropic goals. Here again, the city often serves as a stepping stone to objectives which ultimately are realized elsewhere. And, once again, a critical size and relative eminence must probably be attained before the tendency to look beyond the city to broader vistas begins to moderate. The individual or family whose wealth and influence are based in New York, or even Atlanta, does not aspire to renown in Binghamton, Macon - or Greensboro. But it does not work the other way. The small-city magnate and his successors are likely to seek both economic and social rewards outside their city of origin. This tendency can never altogether be overcome, but it is seemingly possible to pass a point beyond which eminence in the city of origin is of sufficient importance to sustain long-range interest and effort instead of merely serving as a starting point to be ignored as soon as a reasonable prospect for renown elsewhere can be seen.

Quite possibly, certain characteristics of the specific economic activities in a city are important determinants of the extent to which its successful enterprises and families regard that city as their permanent base rather than a stepping stone. Businesses whose principal markets are nearby and

those tied to the locality by legal restrictions or the presence of unique resources are likely to see themselves as long-term citizens and builders of a city. Firms oriented toward national markets and utilizing resources which could readily be duplicated elsewhere are less prone to close local identifications. Probably also, enterprises serving national markets in which many sellers compete vigorously with each other are more prone to behave like transients than are enterprises in industries where competition is less fierce and a small number of firms dominates the situation.

Since Greensboro has few unique resources, this kind of tie to the city is of slight importance. Moreover, those kinds of enterprises which Greensboro failed to generate or lost early in its development through accident, merger, or other routes, are in precisely those fields likely to have close local ties, banking, public utilities, services, retail and wholesale trade. Those industries in which the city has retained prominence as a center of management, textiles and insurance primarily, are such that enterprises are only incidentally concerned with local markets and/or distinctive local resources. They must, of necessity, look to a far broader area for the keys to success. For them, location in a particular place is more a matter of convenience and competitive advantage than of any consideration likely to build a permanent identification.

This combination of attitudes and circumstances; the personal tendency to look beyond Greensboro for the satisfaction of ultimate goals; the corporate propensity to seek or acquiesce to an attractive merger after a measure of success has been attained; and the lack of close identification with the city by large enterprises which continue to be domiciled in it, seem to have had--in combination

with rapid growth--interesting effects. Unlike many similar cities, Greensboro appears not to have a narrow and firmly entrenched group of oligarchs who, in the end, always decide the course of events. Powerful individuals reside here, but they do not dominate to the same extent as in many other places. To a degree, this frees the city of the dead hand of a ruling establishment set against change and determined to maintain its own position at whatever cost to the community. On the other hand, it also deprives the city of the leadership which enlightened oligarchs sometimes do provide. This leadership is sorely missed, most particularly in cultural, educational, political, and social areas where only those among the very wealthy who are willing to give time and money in large amounts can be effective.

✓ Greensboro is operated mainly by people who are middle-class in approach, outlook, ambition, power, and income. They have a strong tendency to be rational and pragmatic and are effective in working with those kinds of problems in which efficient and well-intentioned business management is sufficient to the task at hand. Thus, the city is able to organize and support a major golf tournament; it can conduct successful United Fund campaigns; it can apply an uncommon measure of reason and compromise to racial problems; it can get political support for slum clearance, improvement of schools, assurance of adequate water, planning of traffic flow, and other undertakings which are the civic counterparts of the problems dealt with by upper-middle management in a business enterprise. The outlook and techniques which are natural to the Greensboro in-group are effective at the level of one-by-one problem-solving.

On the whole, its performance is superior to that found in cities where the professional-managerial class abandons the running of the town to a corrupt (or simply inept) political machine or to supine lackeys of the "big rich" of the place. But still something is missing. Middle management, the professionals, and the small businessmen tend not to bother with visions of a great city seen dimly in the future, or, if they see these, have no necessary commitment to them. Professional-managerial groups are highly mobile and do not necessarily view themselves as a part of the Greensboro of ten years or twenty years hence; small businessmen are generally content if they prosper a little more this year than last. Further, those in these classes who are disposed toward enlightened planning of the future at long-range characteristically lack the personal resources and the control over corporate resources which would permit them to give substance to their dreams.

Perhaps because so much of the burden of dealing with the city's problems and its opportunities is thrust upon the middle class, there is extant an easily perceptible lack of confidence in the future of Greensboro. An unstated but real suspicion exists that stagnation is just around the corner. Nobody quite says that each new industrial facility will be the last, that the decay of downtown is a permanent state, that Greensboro colleges and universities are forever doomed to third-class status, or that the city will always be upstaged by Charlotte, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem, but the feeling is there and its effects are real. One result is almost immediately apparent to an outsider who visits Greensboro. This is a feeling of having come to a pleasant but old and staid city which has already realized most of its potential for economic, cultural and civic development. Even a cursory glance at maps

and statistics suggests that precisely the opposite is true; Greensboro is a young and comparatively progressive city with great unrealized potential in every dimension of urban life.

Just how a city's self-image can be changed is hard to say. In the case of Greensboro, one key may be found in mounting a serious effort to involve its highest income class on the one hand and its poorest groups on the other more actively in planning and working for the future of the city.

A considerable number of large fortunes have been spawned in Greensboro over the years. The process of making them gave the city many of the industrial, financial, and commercial enterprises which are its chief supports and so contributed greatly to growth and prosperity. This unavoidable contribution seems, with a few exceptions, to have approximated the sum total of the benefit received from the accumulations of personal wealth generated here. Apart from simple reinvestment in economic enterprises, Greensboro wealth seems rarely to have flowed in substantial sums toward undertakings designed to create a better Greensboro.³ Nor do the present beneficiaries of the historic process of wealth accumulation often seem to place themselves in the forefront of agitation and planning for civic betterment. Even on a scale appropriate to local circumstances, it is hard to find counterparts in philanthropy or public

³Religious and medical facilities have been the beneficiaries of substantial financial assistance, but beyond this not much can be said. Ironically, what is probably the greatest single contribution to the city's physical attractiveness has come from a land monopoly whose capable exploitation of its extensive holdings has given Greensboro a broad expanse of exceptionally pleasant, if architecturally dull, residential suburbs.

service of the modern Rockefellers, Mellons, Fords or DuPonts in Greensboro.

The lack of emotional and financial involvement with building the not-strictly-economic dimensions of Greensboro on the part of its highest-income stratum is not peculiar to this city alone. Nor is recognition of it to be construed as a condemnation of the individuals who have remained disengaged. Like the remarks made previously about the losses implicit in the disappearance of independent enterprises through merger, recognition of a lack of intense involvement of the top economic group in furthering the development of the city is a statement of circumstances. There is no evidence that the rich and powerful in Greensboro are less generous or less interested in the general betterment of the world than are similar groups elsewhere. But neither their generosity nor their altruistic actions have been focused on Greensboro itself. Until both of these are brought to bear more directly on the qualitative and quantitative evolution of the city, these will be less rapid and less attractive than they might be.

At the other extreme of the income scale, lack of emotional attachment to and involvement in the development of the city is more understandable. In the past there has been little that the very poor could do to improve their own position, let alone that of the city. And they had scant reason to love the locality to which providence and chance assigned them. Neither the economy nor the polity of Greensboro can be condemned on account of the presence here of a submerged stratum. In truth, the city has less desperate poverty and treats its poor with less inhumanity than is the case with most other southern cities and some outside the South.

Nonetheless, poor education, lack of opportunity, discriminatory treatment and sheer ignorance of the paths to betterment have combined with the inevitable problems created by advanced age and physical or mental handicaps to exclude too large a segment of the population from effective political and economic citizenship. The best thing that the severely disadvantaged can do to promote the development of Greensboro is to disappear. And it is much in the interest of the city to see that they do disappear--not through relocation but through upward movement in ambition, in income, and in status. Once the problem is keenly sensed, Greensboro's middle-class, management-oriented ruling group should prove capable of acting decisively to end the waste of human potential which stems from ignorance, poverty, and alienation. To think of a virtually complete elimination of this kind of waste through a collaborative effort on the part of private enterprise, the educational complex, and the city, county, state, and federal governments is not unrealistic in the Greensboro context. Along with other benefits, the heightened self-esteem and broadened horizons engendered by expanding opportunity and rising status are likely to bring more enthusiastic involvement with Greensboro's long-term development by a large number of formerly marginal citizens.⁴

⁴In 1968 and again in 1969 Greensboro was torn by riots which--whatever their proximate causes may have been--gave vent to black (and some white) rage and frustration. These were comparatively mild and comparatively well handled by authorities. In this author's opinion, the disturbances are not evidence of unusually tense race relations or lack of progress toward an open Greensboro society. In viciously repressive social environments, overt violence is often long-delayed, but when it comes it is catastrophic. In more pliable environments, violence may be more frequent but less severe. The road from a master-slave social structure to equality of opportunity is lengthy and poorly marked, but it is a reasonable guess that Greensboro has moved rather far along it.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

It would be presumptuous to offer, on the basis of a study as non-specific as this one, a "plan" for Greensboro's development, and none is offered. In the past, the city's government and others in a position to make their influence felt have demonstrated a capacity for turning general suggestions into concrete plans and, ultimately, into the facilities and services needed to stimulate and accommodate growth. Hopefully, only a little further highlighting of areas in which removal of blocks or storing up of strengths could have high returns will suggest enough constructive changes to make this study worthwhile. With a listing of some of these it will close:

- I. There is a need explicitly to recognize Greensboro's good chance of becoming center city to the urban complex within which it now shares leadership with Winston-Salem and High Point.

Recognition of this possibility should motivate a careful and detailed estimate of the effects which assumption of the central city role could have on Greensboro. Modifications in the city's long-range plans will be necessary if the extraordinary growth likely to accompany this change in status is to be combined with improvement of the Greensboro environment rather than deterioration of it.

- II. A plan of action aimed at making Greensboro the center city of the complex should follow upon recognition that this is possible and logical. It is unlikely that such a plan can effectively be constructed and implemented through government action alone. A major collaborative effort by private Greensboro enterprises, specialists from its educational institutions, and the city and county governments is needed.
- III. Great emphasis has been placed in the last few years on a co-operative approach to planning and problem-solving in the area which has here been called the "urban complex." A serious effort by Greensboro to become the central city for this area would immediately raise the specter of destructive competition and an end to cooperation. This need not happen and must not

happen. The road to central city status for Greensboro (or any other candidate) is paved with enlightenment, beautification, and promotion of internal harmony. Competition whose result is self-improvement instead of petty rivalry and back-biting will hurt nobody and argues for more, not less, complex-wide planning and collaboration.

IV. There is a need for an overall "Development Commission" for Greensboro. This should not be a governmental body as such, but it should play a major part in long-range planning and in coordinating the efforts of present agencies, study groups, and committees concerned with portions of the city's total development. It should also, through sub-commissions, play an active role in actually doing parts of the developmental task. Areas in which such a commission could be active include:

1. Recruitment of employers
2. Recruitment of labor
3. Upgrading of workers' skills
4. Promotion of equality in employment opportunity
5. Development of downtown functions
6. Development of vocational education
7. Development of higher education
8. Improvement of the city's social and cultural environment
9. Improvement of the city's physical environment
10. Promotion of inter-governmental cooperation
11. Promotion of wider political awareness and participation

V. Greensboro's Development Commission should be paralleled by a similar organization representing the urban complex as a whole and seeking to plan, coordinate, and see to the carrying out of a program for development of this larger geographic unit.

VI. Top priority should be given by the Development Commission and other interested groups to study and action in four specific areas of fundamental importance to Greensboro's future.

1. There should be a determined effort aimed at outright eradication of poverty and remaining racial or other discrimination with respect to education, housing, and job opportunities. Through sustained public and private action, Greensboro can become--to its everlasting credit--a city without slums, bitter conflict or large numbers of deprived citizens. This cannot be said of all cities, but it does not seem an unrealistic goal here.

2. An all-out attack on the "downtown problem" should be mounted. If large-scale federal assistance ever materializes, physical redevelopment of the center can proceed at a fast pace. But this is not, in itself, enough. Nor does improvement of downtown have to await a massive inflow of federal dollars. Reconstruction of the economic basis for a center city, at least to the extent necessary to "prime the downtown pump," is a necessity. This dimension of the rebirth of a vital and vigorous center is more a matter for the city government and private enterprise (inside and outside of Greensboro) than for the federal government. Certain specific improvements (out of many possible) come to mind. Most of them have been suggested before, but few have yet materialized.
 - a. Central Greensboro needs a medium-to-large-sized hotel (600 rooms or more) to accommodate transients and conventions. Supporting this and easily accessible to it should be another modern, but smaller, hotel and perhaps a publicly-sponsored convention center.
 - b. At least three large new downtown shopping facilities are needed. These include a full-range department store, a discount-type department store and a middle to upper class merchandise facility. Three such enterprises, with this distribution of market appeal, would be complementary rather than purely competitive with each other. These need not be new firms; a much-expanded Meyer's, Belk, or Thalhimers could serve as one. A major Sears-Roebuck, Penney's or Montgomery Ward installation could be another. The discount operation may prove the most difficult to acquire at a downtown location, but it would, in conjunction with the others, add great appeal for a variety of shoppers.
 - c. An AM radio voice which can be heard reliably at least a few miles outside the city limits is needed in Greensboro.
 - d. The city should provide, with a subsidy if necessary, many additional downtown parking spaces in garages which could release some of the present expanses of asphalt for other, better, uses. High on the list of these better uses for land now occupied by parking lots or dilapidated buildings is creation of small, attractive green areas and indoor-outdoor rest facilities, snack bars, restaurants, cocktail lounges (when this is legally possible) and other amenities for the center-city resident and visitor.
 - e. Effective encouragement should be given to the construction near the downtown area and in a wide variety of price ranges,

of apartment complexes. Most probably these should be designed for and promoted to the elderly, single persons and couples without children.

- f. Public transportation, particularly in and near the center city, should be extensively re-worked. Frequent (every 10 minutes or so) and cheap (or free) service by mini-bus or another means of transportation within a radius of perhaps a mile of the center of town should be seriously considered. At convenient points on the periphery of this service area, cheap or free parking facilities might be needed to attract commuters to jobs and shoppers from outlying areas.
- g. Government services serving a considerable segment of the total populace should be placed, almost without exception, in or very near downtown. In particular, any facility for training or serving other needs of low-income groups should be in the center where it can be served conveniently and cheaply by public transportation.
- h. A serious and continued effort should be made to induce one or more of several large but curiously located North Carolina commercial banks to move its home office operations to central Greensboro. Creation of new Greensboro banks, a process now underway, is an alternative to this, though none can be expected to attain large size quickly and all will be, if successful, attractive candidates for merger.
- i. Much expanded Sunday and evening business hours for downtown retail and service facilities would make them more competitive with outlying establishments as well as making the center city less a desert after dark and on weekends.
- j. Heavy promotion of Greensboro as the shopping, service and entertainment hub for the metropolitan region would probably be effective if its claims had a basis in fact, and if Greensboro information media could reach the whole metropolitan region.
- k. There needs to be a keen awareness of interdependence among downtown installations and functions. One improvement, or two, or three, might fail to have any appreciable impact (and generate heavy financial losses) where a broader and better integrated package of changes could be outstandingly successful.

1. There needs to be a profound respect for the intangibles which can be almost the exclusive property of downtown--and its chief competitive advantage. Convenience, diversity, bustle, excitement, and even beauty of special kinds are the stock in trade of flourishing central business districts.
3. Possibly the most distinctive of Greensboro's long-range advantages by comparison with the other cities in its size class can be the size, breadth, and quality of its higher education establishment. Probably also, this is the least recognized and least utilized of the present Greensboro resources. The educational institutions themselves make little effort to collaborate and are only dimly aware of their collective opportunities. Greensboro wealth, individual and corporate, has found its way into the support of Greensboro education in but small amounts. Business enterprise seems to make little use of the institutions either as sources of information and expertise or as sources of trained employees. The general public, particularly its middle and lower income segments, seems not to realize that commuting opportunities make available quality education at bargain basement prices. And the Greensboro city government apparently regards the colleges as relatively valueless at best and mixtures of nuisance and embarrassment at worst. It has shown, as yet, no consistent disposition to assist their development or capitalize on the potential advantages they afford.

Historically, much of this unhappy separation and lost opportunity could be traced to the specialized character (for undergraduates, for Negroes, for women, etc.) of the Greensboro institutions on the one hand and the low and relatively homogeneous skill levels required by the Greensboro economy on the other. Neither of these forces still operates with the impact of the past, and both should quickly lose most or all of their remaining effect. For the future, the schools badly need each other, the support of Greensboro and the support of the urban complex. Greensboro and the complex need the schools just as badly.

Beginning with the present base there could be, and should be, in Greensboro a system of higher education comprising at least the following:

- a. One university, of a quality comparable to leading state institutions, offering undergraduate work and graduate training through the doctorate in many fields.

- b. One "open door" college offering two-year terminal programs and four-year baccalaureate programs at low cost in all principal academic areas.
- c. Small, selective liberal-arts colleges offering four-year programs.
- d. An institution, or institutions, devoted to large-scale vocational training and retraining as well as to remedial education of a non-college-credit nature for people of many ages and backgrounds.
- e. A major program operated through the colleges and the university for continuing academic education of adults.
- f. A liberal program of financial assistance from federal, state, county, city, and private sources to assure the opportunity to study locally to all qualified students from the urban complex.
- g. A research competence of national stature based on the university, on faculty and facilities of other educational institutions, on the research staffs of city and county governments, on the research and development arms of area businesses, and on whatever state and federal research operations can be obtained for Greensboro's urban complex.

Creation of the facilities and conditions listed would not necessarily involve adding even a single new institution to the group now existing in and around Greensboro. What would be required is a sweeping rationalization of the inconsistent and overlapping or conflicting functions and ambitions of these institutions. Necessary also is a great expansion of them and an almost equally great upgrading of their quality; these imply, in turn a truly massive increase in both private and public financial and moral support.

From the above it follows but, in the Greensboro context, merits saying that, while specialization is necessary and desirable, it should have a rational foundation. There should be no institutions in the future devoted exclusively and in principle to the education of "those of college age," men, women, black, white, the affluent, the poor, or any other group defined on educationally meaningless grounds.

4. There are many dimensions in which expansion of Greensboro's economic base may proceed to the advantage of the city and its surrounding complex. Among all of these, none is so much to be desired as further growth of its management and management services sector. Home offices of companies, substantial branch office operations, research and development installations, engineering facilities, specialized contracting or consulting organizations, and many related types of activity are top-drawer acquisitions. They will grow more important in the future than they ever were in the past, and the city which has more than its share of them will be fortunate indeed.

The virtues of a large proportion of managerial and professional jobs hardly need stress as they are obvious. What does merit emphasis is that a Greensboro search for this kind of enterprise is likely to meet with considerable success. But the search must be accompanied by a sustained effort to make Greensboro the kind of city from which management and its supportive functions can be performed economically, conveniently, and--perhaps most vital in years ahead--within a stimulating but pleasant social, intellectual and physical environment.

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